



More U.S. billionaires pledge to give away wealth

NEW YORK – Another 17 U.S. billionaires, including Facebook co-founders Mark Zuckerberg and Dustin Moskovitz, have pledged to give away at least half their fortunes in a philanthropic campaign led by Warren Buffett and Bill Gates.

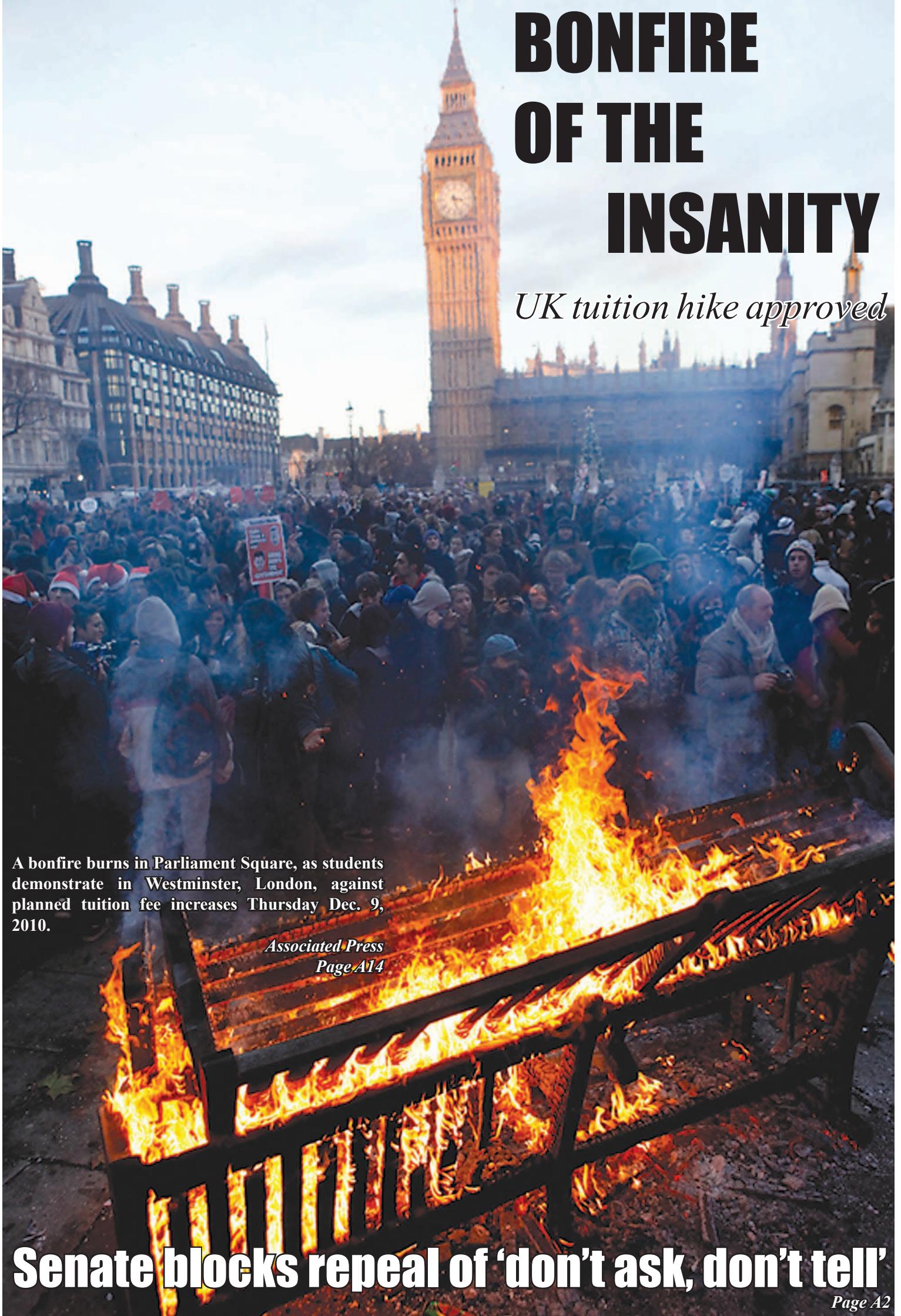
A total of 57 billionaires now have joined The Giving Pledge, which was launched by Microsoft founder Gates and investor Buffett in June. The campaign announced the new pledges in a statement late on Wednesday.

Gates, his wife Melinda, and Buffett have asked U.S. billionaires to give away at least half their wealth during their lifetime or after their death, and to publicly state their intention with a letter explaining their decision.

The Giving Pledge does not accept money or tell people how to donate their money but asks billionaires to make a moral commitment to give their fortunes to charity.

“People wait until late in their career to give back. But why wait when there is so much to be done?” Zuckerberg, who gave \$100 million in September to the beleaguered public schools of Newark, New Jersey, said in a statement.

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WH says tax bill to pass despite Democrats' revolt

Copies of a study by a Pentagon task force studying the US military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy are shown following a briefing at the Pentagon in November 2010. A top democrat said Tuesday the US Senate had the time and votes necessary this year to lift a ban on gays serving openly in the military, countering protests by Republicans that it won't happen.

Read more on Page A5

Senate blocks repeal of 'don't ask, don't tell'

By ANNE FLAHERTY,

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Republicans blocked a last-ditch effort in the Senate to lift the military's ban on openly gay troops on Thursday, dealing a major blow to gay rights groups and making it unlikely Congress could repeal "don't ask, don't tell" any time soon.

The 57-40 vote fell three short of the 60 needed to overcome procedural hurdles to lift the 17-year-old ban. Sen. Susan Collins of Maine was the lone Republican voting to advance the bill, and Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia was the only Democrat to vote against it.

The rejection was a defeat for President Barack Obama, who campaigned promising to overturn the law and later called it one of his top legislative priorities for the year. But in the end, the White House did little to push the legislation, focusing its influence instead on tax cuts and a nuclear arms treaty with Russia. Repeal advocates said the fight wasn't over, but Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid seemed to have little appetite to return to the subject with only a week left in the lame-duck session and other major legislation pending.

"The other side may feel passionately that our military should sanction discrimination based on sexual orientation, but they are clearly in the minority," Reid, D-Nev., said of Republicans. "And they have run out of excuses."

Gay rights advocates were furious because the Senate vote failed largely because of a procedural disagreement.

"Instead of doing what is right, the world's greatest deliberative body devolved into shameful school yard spats that put petty partisan politics above the needs of our women and men in uniform," said Joe Solmonese, president of the Human Rights Campaign, a gay rights group.

The 1993 law bans gay troops from publicly acknowledging their sexual orientation. A repeal provision was included in a broader defense policy bill and passed last spring in the House. More than 60 senators were expected to support repeal, with at least four Republicans having said they support overturning "don't ask, don't tell."

But GOP senators were united in demanding that the Senate vote on tax cuts first. They also wanted assurances by Reid they would be given extensive time debate on the defense bill, which contained other divisive provisions including one that would allow abortions at overseas military facilities.

Democrats had said Thursday morning they remained hopeful a last-minute deal could be struck with Collins, believing her support would persuade other GOP senators — namely Massachusetts Sen. Scott Brown and Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski — to advance the legislation.

In the end, however, Reid said time was running out and called for a vote before a deal could be struck.

Collins said she didn't understand why Reid wasn't doing more to accommodate GOP concerns.

"There was such a clear path for us to be able to get this done,"



Sen. Joseph Lieberman, I-Conn., right, accompanied by Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, gestures during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Dec. 9, 2010, following the defeat of a cloture motion of the Defense Authorization Bill containing repeal of the 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' provision.

(AP Photo/Harry Hamburg)

she said on the Senate floor. "I'm perplexed and frustrated that this important bill will become victim of politics."

The Senate vote came after former Democratic Sen. Sam Nunn announced in an interview with The Associated Press that he thinks gays could serve openly without damaging the armed forces' ability to fight. Nunn, who had led opposition to gays in the military in 1993, said he would advise that the Pentagon be given at least a year to prepare troops for the change.

"Society has changed, and the military has changed," the former senator from Georgia said.

Last week, the Pentagon unveiled a study that found two-thirds of troops thought repealing "don't ask, don't tell" would have little impact on their unit's ability to fight. Still, the service's top uniformed leaders cautioned about overturning the policy too soon. In congressional testimony last week, three of the four service chiefs said they would oppose lifting the ban during wartime because of resistance among combat troops. While most troops signaled they didn't care if gays served openly, nearly 60 percent of the Marine Corps and Army soldiers in combat arms units predicted problems would arise. Manchin said he voted against the bill because repeal shouldn't happen while troops are fighting in Afghanistan. □



Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg listens to a question after unveiling a new messaging system during a news conference in San Francisco, California November 15, 2010.

BILLIONAIRES PLEDGE

Continued from Front Page

"With a generation of younger folks who have thrived on the success of their companies, there is a big opportunity for many of us to give back earlier in our lifetime and see the impact of our philanthropic efforts," he said.

In addition to Zuckerberg and Moskovitz, the world's youngest billionaires, pledges were made by AOL co-founder Steve Case, financier Carl Icahn and Michael Milken, a former Wall Street executive who went to prison in the early 1990s for securities violations.

"CHANGE LIVES".

Morningstar Chief Executive Joe Mansueto, businessman Nicolas Berggruen and private investor Ted Forstmann also are among the new billionaires to take the pledges.

"In just a few short months we've made good progress," said Buffett, who made his fortune with insurance and investment company Berkshire Hathaway Inc.

"The Giving Pledge has re-energized people thinking about philanthropy and doing things in philanthropy and I look forward to many more conversations with families who are truly fortunate and whose generosity can and will change lives," he said.

Along with speaking to about a quarter of the wealthiest people in the United States about The Giving Pledge, Gates and Buffett hosted a dinner with Chinese billionaires in Beijing in September in a bid to promote a culture of philanthropy in China. □

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Imam behind NYC mosque plan sees hope after fury

NEW YORK – Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf saw his plans for an Islamic center near ground zero derided as a victory mosque for terrorists, exploited as campaign fodder and used as a bargaining chip by a Florida pastor who vowed to burn the Quran.

After that summer of mistrust and raw feeling, he's looking on the bright side.

Rauf says he hopes to use the platform he gained through the angry debate to turn his small nonprofit group into a global movement celebrating pluralism.

In an interview Tuesday with The Associated Press, Rauf said he hopes to see interfaith centers like the one he plans to include inside the downtown Manhattan Islamic center built all over the world. Each would be dedicated to fighting extremism and promoting better relations between people of different faiths and cultures. Already, he said, he is exploring opening facilities in other American cities, as well as in Indonesia and Kosovo.

"We went to the brink, in a certain way," he said of last summer's tumult. But he added, "This crisis showed us what was possible. ... It showed us that there is actually hope. Hope for a better relationship between America and the Muslim world, both domestically and internationally."

Whether there is hope for the proposed center two blocks from the site of the World Trade Center attacks is unclear.

The superheated rhetoric of August and early September has died down, aside from the occasional downtown demonstration, and there appear to be no major governmental obstacles, but the \$150 million project still remains on a slow track to construction.

The developer of the site has said groundbreaking is probably three years away. The nonprofit group that would run the center is still being established. A fundraising campaign has yet to begin. Developer Sharif El-Gamal has said he plans to borrow most of the money needed to build by selling a type of bond common in Islamic banking.

The timetable will give Rauf and his wife, the activist Daisy Khan, more time to make their case that a Muslim institution belongs at ground zero. They envision a 13- to 15-story facility with space for a health club, a day care center and playground, an auditorium for cultural events, art studios and galleries, a 9/11 memorial and a two-level prayer room with seating for a congregation of 2,000.

"We were part of the narrative of 9/11," Rauf said, noting that members of his own congregation, based about 10 blocks from the

Trade Center, had been victims of the attacks. "We have an obligation. We have a responsibility" to participate in the rebuilding of the neighborhood, he said. "This center is an anti-9/11 statement."

Convincing the country, though, hasn't been easy.

As city officials declined to block the center, critics, including many prominent Republicans, decried it as a slap in the face to the families of Sept. 11 victims. Newt Gingrich compared the center to Nazis putting a sign next to the Holocaust Museum.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg and religious leaders of many faiths have been among the center's most ardent supporters. Relatives of 9/11 victims have come out on both sides.

The debate took a bizarre turn when the leader of a small Christian congregation in Florida said he would call off his plans to burn the Quran on the Sept. 11 anniversary if the Islamic center were moved farther from ground zero. Rauf agreed to nothing not even to meet with Pastor Terry Jones but Jones still ended up changing his mind about burning Islam's holy book.

Rauf and Khan said they have begun talking in recent weeks with more relatives of 9/11 victims in an attempt to build support for the center.

Khan said she hoped some would agree to be "part of the healing process" and help design the center's 9/11 memorial.

The couple are also trying to find a role for themselves in repairing what they see as a rift between U.S. Muslims and the nation's Christian majority.

Mere acceptance of Muslims in the U.S. is not Rauf's goal.

"It is not enough for me that you tolerate me," he explained to an audience in Jakarta last month. "I want you to love me."

The Cordoba Initiative is a pro-Western organization that sent election monitors last spring to Sudan, and Rauf has spent much of his life preaching religious tolerance and the need for people of different faiths to work together.

Rauf and Khan have kept their offices for years in the Interchurch Center, a Manhattan office tower packed with Christian religious agencies that was conceived as a space where different denominations could mingle and collaborate.

His social friends are as likely to be Jewish or Christian as they are Muslim. The Very Rev. James Morton, retired dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, recalled how his family, Rauf, Khan and a rabbi once spent 10 days together on a Mediterranean cruise. □



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Tips for spending Christmas away from home



ANNE WALLACE ALLEN,
Associated Press

When Jen Fruzzetti realized she'd be celebrating Christmas with other backpackers on an Australian beach, she invited her father to fly in from Philadelphia to join them.

Like many other holiday travelers, Fruzzetti wanted to connect with home in a way that was beloved and familiar as she spent the holiday in a foreign place.

Christmas in a hot climate "felt surreal," said Fruzzetti, who traveled around the world with a backpack in 2008 and 2009. She found that giving Christmas gifts to her dad in person — clothing and art she had purchased in Cambodia — made the holiday in St. Kilda, a suburb of Melbourne, seem more like the ones she remembered from her Philly childhood,

despite all that was different. "Of course no restaurants or grocery stores were open, so my dad spent half the morning traipsing around the city trying to find takeaway shops serving something to eat," said Fruzzetti, 28. "It didn't matter, it was 90 degrees out and too hot to eat on the beach anyway." Typically during the Christmas and New Year's holiday period, tens of millions of Americans travel more than 50 miles away from home, according to annual research from AAA. For some, hiding the presents in a suitcase and hitting the road or hopping on a plane is a long-standing tradition. They've developed skills and traditions to enjoy Christmas away from home, often by connecting to a familiar aspect of the holiday no matter where they are,

whether it's a favorite food, a church service or even a tree in a hotel room.

David McCown of Boise, Idaho, is a veteran of Christmas travel.

His wife is from Sweden, his mother lives in Italy and his siblings are spread out in other parts of western Europe. McCown adapts to the traditions of the place where he happens to be. In Hawaii, that means convincing his 4-year-old that Santa Claus sometimes wears flip-flops.

At his in-laws', that means joining into a tradition of drinking vodka shots at Christmas dinner. "I don't know if that's Swedish tradition or just the males in her family's tradition," McCown said.

For those who aren't staying with relatives, finding a festive meal can be difficult on Dec. 24 or 25. Many businesses close early Christmas Eve and stay closed the next day.

Eating early — before 4 p.m. — on Christmas Eve helps, said Linda Kramer of Gibbon, Minn. Her husband, a farmer, can't get away from home in summer, so they often travel over the winter holidays.

"Christmas Day is usually a hunt for a restaurant," said

Kramer. "Better yet, if we stay in a hotel room with a kitchen we can make our own mini-feast."

Religious services are also a part of Christmas for many travelers. "Christmas 2008 was tough," said Corinne Dillon, who spent that holiday in Beijing alone. "I found that going to Christmas Mass — I'm Catholic — really helped a lot because it's pretty much identical to the service in my home parish."

Dillon, a New Jersey native who is now 26, ended up meeting some migrant laborers at the service at the church, known as the South Church or Southern Cathedral in Beijing, and sharing noodles with them afterward.

"It was only then I realized that Christmas wasn't about lots of gifts, but about doing good," she said. "I felt like that was the first and only Christmas where I'd done that."

Kramer said church is the most important tie to Christmas her family found in their travels. "We find churches that are similar to the one we are going to at home," Kramer said. "Although of course the people and location are different, we really like finding people who believe the same as we do, and

worshipping with them."

Santa and a Christmas tree are also very important. A guest at the Hotel Plaza Athenee in New York City spent \$1,000 to have a designer decorate a Christmas tree in her room. "We actually packaged it up afterwards and sent it back to her home in Florida," said Karen Goldberg, the hotel's marketing director.

Traditional foods can also be critical to enjoying Christmas in a strange place. Chefs at Hotel Plaza Athenee

have prepared English pudding, the French dessert buche de noel, and stollen, a German holiday bread, for European guests who asked in advance.

A guest at Steamboat Grand hotel in Steamboat Springs, Colo., once left a pair of shoes outside of the room on Christmas Eve and asked hotel staff to ensure they were filled with fruit and nuts the next morning, said spokeswoman Loryn Kasten.

That's a popular European tradition.

Kasten said hotel guests frequently ask for decorated trees in their room, and a few times have requested direct contact with Santa.

"Santa knocks on the door and says hello," said Kasten. "We've also had requests to have Santa call and talk to the kids, so we've done that too." □

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WH says tax bill to pass despite Democrats' revolt

By DAVID ESPO,
AP Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON — Angry House Democrats staged a noisy revolt Thursday against President Barack Obama's year-end tax cut agreement with Republicans, pledging to block a vote unless there are changes to scale back billions ticketed to help the rich. The White House still predicted quick passage.

"If it's take it or leave it, we'll leave it," said Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas, after a closed-door meeting in which rank-and-file Democrats chanted, "Just say no."

Despite the flare-up, the White House expressed confidence the measure would be approved before Congress goes home for the year, and Senate Democratic officials said talks were under way to add tax breaks for the alternative energy industry as a way of building support in the party.

"The deal will get passed," said presidential press secretary Robert Gibbs. There were no predictions to the contrary among senior Democrats on either side of the Capitol.

As announced by Obama on Monday, the deal would extend tax breaks at all income levels that are due to expire on Jan. 1, renew a program of jobless benefits for the long-term unemployed that is due to lapse within days and implement a one-year cut in Social Security taxes.

The two-year cost of the plan, estimated at as much as \$900 billion, would further swell record federal deficits.

Despite the additional red ink, the president has said the plan is essential to add strength to an economy recovering slowly from the worst recession in eight decades. Joblessness stands at 9.8 percent, and a top White House official bluntly warned Democrats earlier in the week they would bear responsibility for a return to recession if they blocked the measure.

Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell has said he expects most of his rank and file to support the bill. Prominent House Republicans back it, too, although they have generally refrained from speaking out at a time when doing so would divert attention from the spectacle of Obama at odds with lawmakers of his own party.

Rep. John Boehner of Ohio, in line to become House speaker when Republicans take power in January, "supports

the framework as agreed to by" Obama and McConnell and spoke with the president about it over the weekend, a spokesman said Thursday. Rep. Paul Ryan, of Wisconsin, whose views on economic issues are influential among House Republicans, also swung behind it. "While I have concerns with some specific aspects of the plan, I support the proposed framework to avert further economic hardship and provide a first step to restore the foundations for sustained growth and job creation," he said in an interview.

It was not clear precisely what changes House Democrats would seek, but much of the criticism focused on a provision that would cut taxes on large estates.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., said, "That was a bridge too far for many of our members" already upset



Budget Director Jacob Lew, second from right, gestures during a meeting of the Deficit Commission in the Roosevelt Room of the White House in Washington, Thursday, Dec. 9, 2010. From left are, Commission member Alice Rivlin, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, Lew, and Senate Majority Whip Richard Durbin of Ill.

(AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

about Obama's decision to bow to Republican demands for extending tax cuts on individuals making over \$200,000 and couples earning more than \$250,000.

Under the estate tax provision,

the first \$5 million of a couple's estate could pass to heirs without taxation, and an additional \$5 million for the spouse. The balance would be subject to a 35 percent tax rate. □



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Pa. couple sought in dismemberment of Calif. Man



SUSPECT GARCIA



SUSPECT GARCIA

LOS ANGELES – Authorities were on the hunt for a Pennsylvania couple after the body of a Good Samaritan who befriended them was cut into pieces and stashed in a backpack and under a bed in a Skid Row hotel room, police and family said.

Edward Garcia Jr., 36, and Melissa Hope Garcia, 25, who also goes by the name of Melissa Turner, were charged Tuesday with murder and the special circumstances of torture in the Thanksgiving killing of Herbert Tracy White, 49, of Los Angeles. The couple from York, Pa., had several previous arrests for robbery in that state and they are considered armed and

dangerous, Detective Richard Arciniega said.

White's family asked for the public's help in finding the Garcias.

"Get these monsters off the streets," said a brother, Anthony DeMarco White, 51, of Los Angeles.

The couple likely tried to rob White before the killing, the detective said. White was cut into five pieces with a knife and his limbs were stuffed into a backpack, Arciniega said. His torso was found wrapped in a blanket under the bed.

A maid discovered the body on the morning of Nov. 29.

The couple had tried to wipe up the blood in their room at the Continental Hotel, and

investigators suspect they were going to take away the body but were interrupted, Arciniega said.

Investigators believe White, from Hollywood, met the couple a day or two earlier. "He befriended them, helped them out, gave them money, maybe a place to stay, and they ended up killing him," Arciniega said.

At a news conference, weeping relatives said White, who had battled alcoholism but was clean for 15 years, went out of his way to help the unfortunate. He felt it was a way of paying back the help he had been given.

White would get up in the middle of the night to drive home friends who had been drinking, hired homeless people off the street to help him with odd jobs and doled out cash that he kept in his pocket, said another brother,

David White, 49, of Los Angeles.

David White said when he last talked to his brother less than two weeks before his death, Herbert White said it was his "busy time of year" for helping people.

Herbert White had mentioned that after Thanksgiving, he had met a "lovely young couple" at an ATM and had given them a couple of cigarettes and a few dollars, said his mother, Elizabeth White.

Around 2 a.m. on Nov. 28, Herbert White got a telephone call and told his wife that he had to go and give someone a ride, she said.

"He said, 'I'll see you tomorrow.' That's the last I saw of him," Annie Coty-White said.

Her husband borrowed her car, which was found outside the hotel where he was killed. The night before his body was

discovered, a security guard received a report of a noisy commotion in the hotel room, Arciniega said.

The guard knocked on the door and told them to "stop with the noise."

Family members said it was likely their brother, an athletically built man who stood 6-foot-5 and knew martial arts, was ambushed.

The York Dispatch newspaper in Pennsylvania said that on Feb. 22, 2009, the Garcias lured a convicted drug dealer to their home, bound him and robbed him, and later had exchanges involving knives and guns with associates who came to get him, according to charging documents.

The Garcias later pleaded guilty to false imprisonment and were sentenced to time served, the newspaper said. Kidnapping and other charges were dropped. □

Publicists' killer: Friends told me not to call TV show

Chasen's death.

Police say Smith's gun appears to be the same weapon used to kill Chasen last month.

Hollywood's whodunit about the wealthy publicist gunned down driving home from a movie premiere now appears to be more of a garden-variety crime gone wrong.

Police on Wednesday said preliminary ballistics tests showed the gun a man used to kill himself as officers went to talk to him about Ronni Chasen's killing was the same weapon that was used to kill her.

Harold Martin Smith, 43, a down-on-his-luck ex-convict with a rap sheet spanning at least 25 years, had apparently ridden his bicycle to a dark intersection on Sunset Boulevard then attempted to rob Chasen.

"This was a random act of violence.

With Mr. Smith's background, we believe that it was most likely a robbery gone bad," Beverly Hills police Sgt. Mike Publicker said. "Through the interviews and the information we received, that leads us to believe that he was at a

desperate point in his life, and was reaching out and doing desperate measures."

Smith committed suicide Dec. 1 as police, acting on an anonymous tip left with the TV show "America's Most Wanted," went to speak with him at a seedy Hollywood apartment building from which he had recently been evicted. Before police could talk to him, he pulled out a revolver and shot himself in the head.

It's another surprising turn in the investigation; just this week, law enforcement sources questioned whether

Smith's gun was even the same kind that was used to shoot Chasen. Neighbors speculated Smith's boasting about the crime was the ramblings of a man with mental issues who could not have carried out the homicide.

Though police said that gun appeared to be the same one used to kill Chasen, they cautioned that ballistics tests were preliminary and a final analysis could take two weeks. Smith and Chasen's lives could hardly have been more different. □

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BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. – The tipster who called "America's Most Wanted" with vital information about a man suspected of killing a Hollywood publicist says his friends, family and even his doctor told him to stay out of the case.

The tipster, whose name is not being released, told the show that people believed he was making something out of nothing, and he almost gave up calling the show because of phone problems.

The show posted his comments online Thursday. Beverly Hills police say the tip led them to Harold Martin Smith, an ex-con who had been staying at a sleazy Hollywood apartment building.

Smith shot himself in the head before detectives could question him about Ronni

LOCAL

Aruba TODAY



This is an event you do not want to miss!

FATMAN SCOOP and DJ JEAN to perform on Saturday



ORANJESTAD - Saturday Night at the newly renovated Havana Beach Club now called "Nikky Beach Club" locals and tourists are anxiously awaiting the one time performance of legendary hype man Fatman Scoop from New York and Dj Jean from Holland. This is becoming a very big event as never before two headliners are performing under the same roof on one night.

Fatman Scoop has won 2 Grammy Awards and 2 MTV Awards for collaborating on songs with Rihanna, David Guetta, Dj Chuckie, Sean Paul, Mariah Carey, Missy and many more. Currently he is touring with superstar Usher and coincidentally had a free Saturday which he made available for Aruba. His biggest hit is the popular club banger "Be Faithfull".

Dj Jean on the other hand comes from The Netherlands and is one of Europe's most skilled dj's. His specialty is euro-dance but he also surprises everyone with some hip-hop tracks.

Continued on Page A9

Mr. Mario Bikker appointed as Director Airport Development



ORANJESTAD - The Aruba Airport Authority N.V. is pleased to announce that its sole shareholder, the Government of Aruba, has appointed Mr. Mario G. Bikker as Director Airport Development. Mr. Bikker will jointly form the Board of Directors of the

Development of the company. As per January 1, 2011 Mr. Peter Steinmetz as General Managing Director and Mr. Bikker as Director Airport Development will jointly form the Board of Directors of the

Aruba Airport Authority N.V. Mr. Bikker is an engineer with ample experience in the airport business. He was born in Aruba and studied engineering in the Netherlands. Mr. Bikker started his career at the airport

With financial help from Aruba Scholarship Foundation.

Denyse Fingal Becomes First Aruban Female Executive Chef



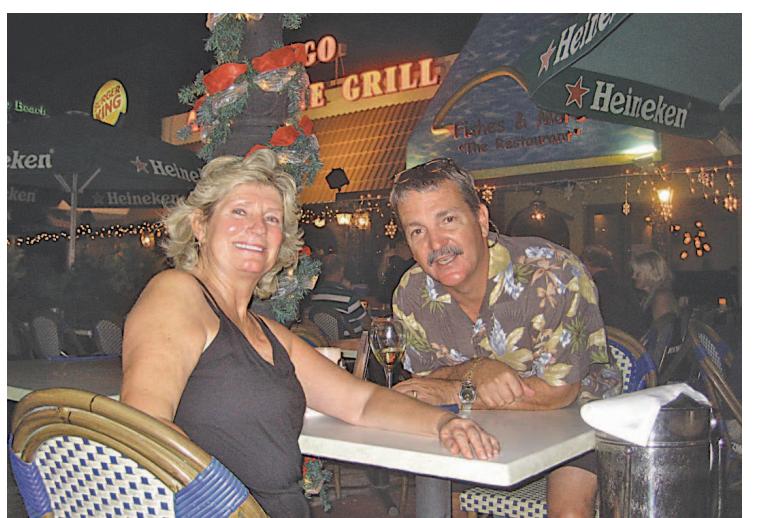
Four years ago, in an interview with the selection committee of the Aruba Scholarship Foundation, Denyse Fingal declared that her dream was to become the first female Aruban executive chef. With much hard work and financial assistance from Aruba Scholarship Foundation, this year Denyse has made her dream come true.

Recently the prestigious Divi Links' WINDOW ON ARUBA Restaurant employed her as Chef de Partie after she had successfully completed her studies

of culinary arts at Johnson and Whales University of North Miami, Florida. Denyse is the daughter of Kenneth and Yolanda Fingal of Kibaima 15, Santa Cruz. She graduated from EPI-Hospitality in 2006 and now hopes to help her Aruban alma mater as chef in the future. Aruba Scholarship Foundation congratulates Denyse and her parents for her historic achievement. For more information about the Aruba Scholarship Foundation, please contact clydeharms@yahoo.com. □



Holiday Spirit for Arawak's December Food & Wine Festival



PALM BEACH - Last Saturday evening's Arawak Food & Wine Festival drew an enthusiastic crowd, which greatly enjoyed strolling around the booths and sampling what the restaurants offered food-wise. The Arawak restaurants were filled to the brim with diners who came for the special offers of Salt & Pepper, Tango, Burger King, Soprano's, Casa

Tua and Fishes 'n More. Live music and no rain showers for a change, made the atmosphere very festive indeed.

The Arawak Food & Wine Festival is a happening which takes place on the first Saturday evening of the month.

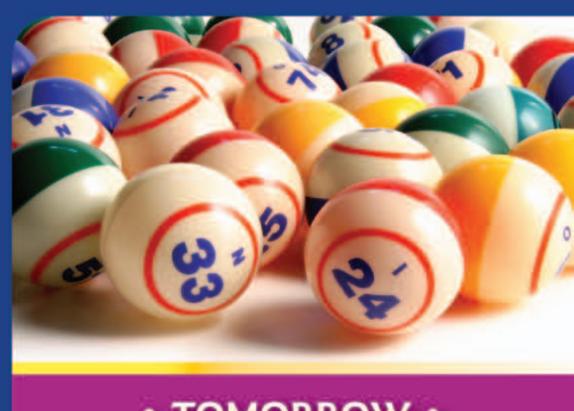
Pictured are guests enjoying dinner at the most popular seafood restaurant Fishes 'n More. □



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FATMAN SCOOP and DJ JEAN to perform on Saturday



KEVIN PAIGE PHOTOGRAPHY

Continued from Page A7

That is what this event is all about. House vs Urban. A great mix of today's and classics hits of house and urban.

Tickets have already sold like crazy at Bula Surf Shop in Royal Plaza, Underground Cycles on the Boulevard, Chino Latino at The Village Mall and Nikky Beach Club which is located downtown in front of the Talk of The Town Hotel. At the door there will also be a limited amount of tickets. General tickets are only \$20 per person. On this night there will also be a very exclusive VIP. For vip enquiries the number to call is 733-5577.

Promoters Ilovemuzika and Superbo Events would like to thank their sponsors Digicel, Chivas Regal, Malibu, Absolut, Havana Club, 24ora.



com, Full Throttle Energy Drink, The Westin Resort, Nikky Beach Club, Cool FM, Magic FM, Real FM, Show y Mas, Undiadencida and ITV Canal 49. It is advisable to reach early to the venue as a large amount of people are expected to attend this event.

The venue is located at about 10 minutes from the High Rise Hotel Areas. At the end of the night Taxi's will be available for returns to the hotels. Although the entrance will be through the beach area, most of the event will be indoors. □

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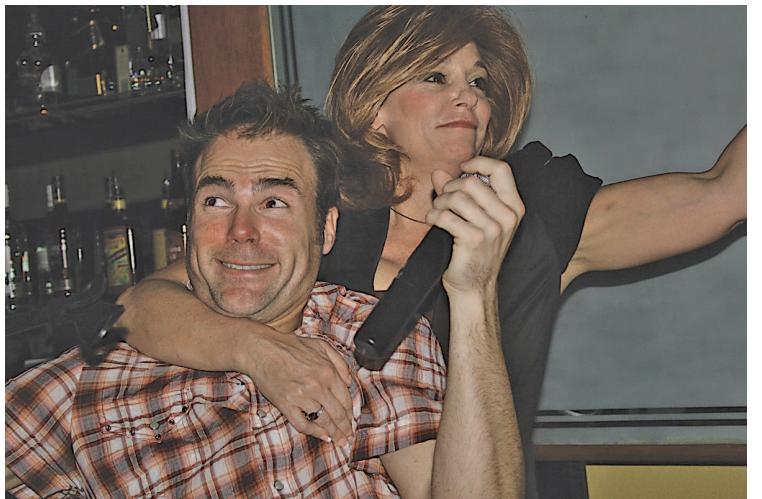
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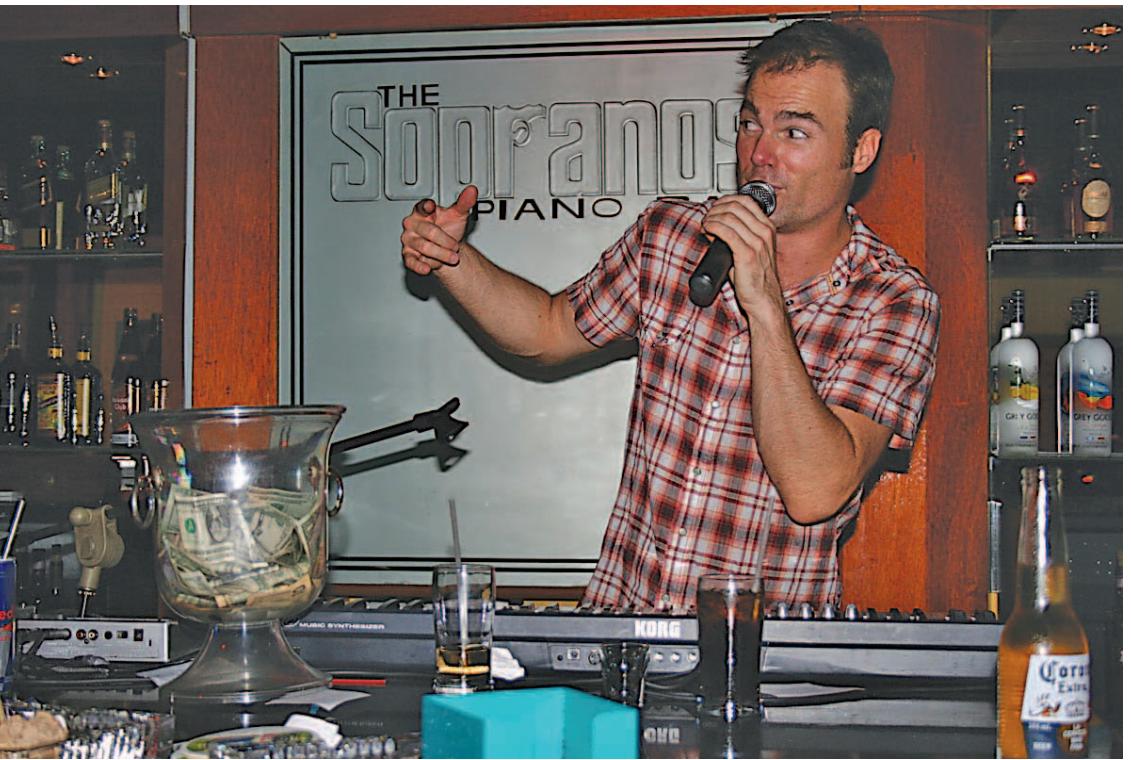
Visitors are enjoying entertainer Peter Zwerver



PALM BEACH - Peter Zwerver is pianist, singer and is now entertaining at Sopranos Piano Bar in the Arawak Gardens in Palm Beach. He has experience in piano bars all over the world.

Making contact directly with the people is one of his specialties. He doesn't play for the audience, but with the audience.

So there always will be enough time to request songs.



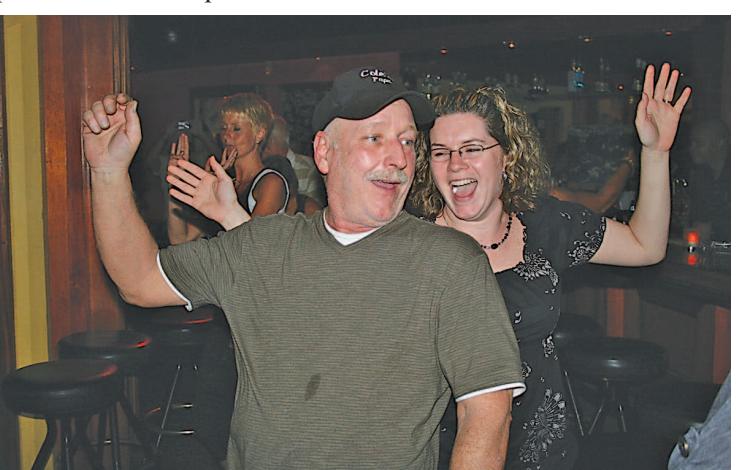
Singing together with him is encouraged! His array of music is so big that everyone will hear their favorite songs. Because of his experience with audience of different countries and nationalities, he is fluent in both English and Dutch.

Sopranos clubby environs feature a refreshingly informal, open-air nightclub where tourists are just as welcomed as the crowds of regulars to ham it up, off-key with a talented piano man.



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an all ages clientele and happy socializers late into the night. □





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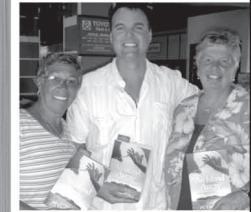
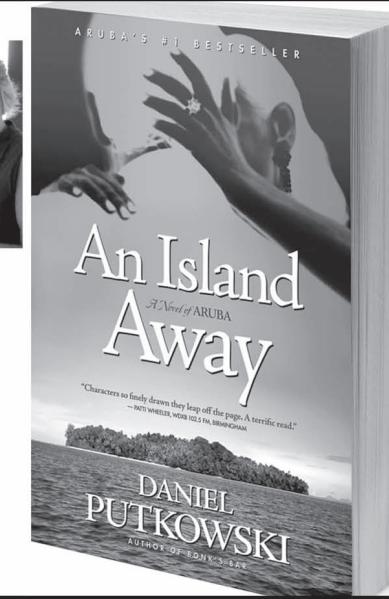
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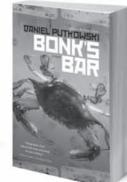
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a Distinguished Visitor after coming to Aruba for more than 10 years.

Pictured: Mr. Ricardo Croes

together with Andrew and Ivette from Playa Linda Resort. □

PALM BEACH - Recently at the Playa Linda Resort, vacationers were presented with honorary titles created by the Ministry of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guest visiting Aruba for ten and 20 consecutive years. Special friends of Aruba, enjoying ten

or more annual vacations here, are given the Distinguished Guest certificate and those with twenty consecutive years are awarded the Ambassador of Goodwill title. The recent honoring was effected by the Aruba Tourism Authority Associate Ricardo Croes



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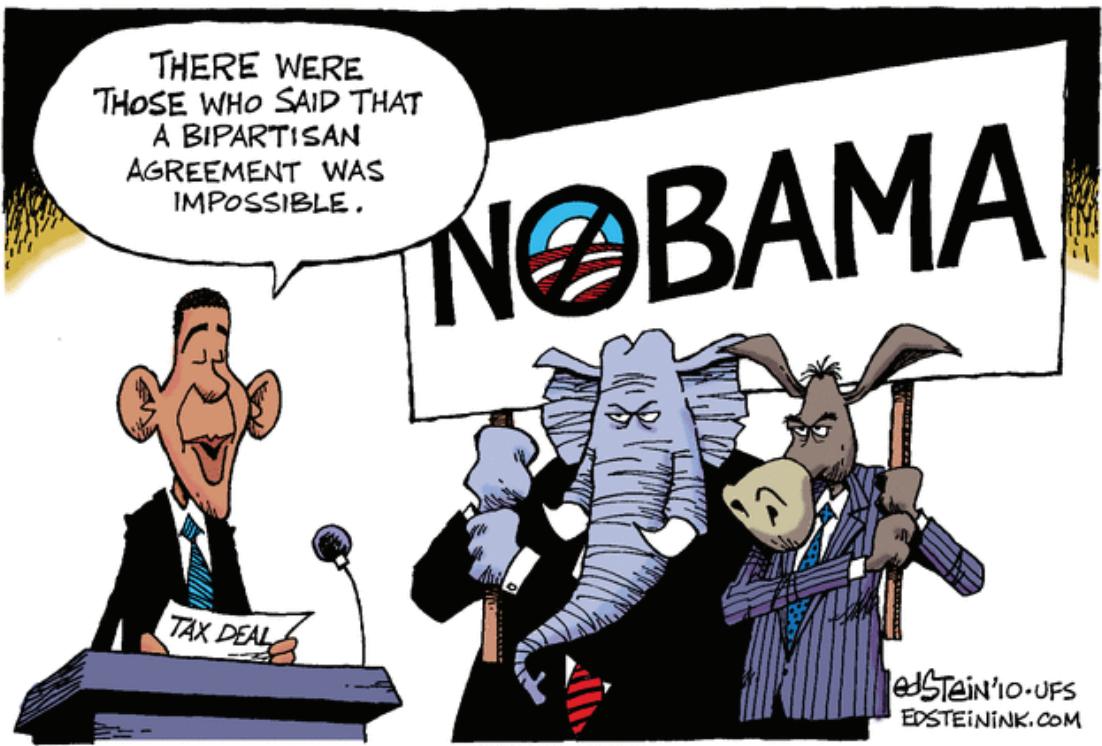
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HUMAN HINTS

External Distortion

Self awareness is the ultimate personal power. When you know your self, you become more aware of the forces acting on you, distorting you, often toward a motive that is not your own. Your genuine self is the only baseline reference point by which you can measure external forces acting on you.

When an external force acts on you, you can feel it. It is uncomfortable at best and maddening at worst. You'll be thinking about a situation in which you weren't comfortable, and find yourself suddenly enraged. Your anger is a red flag telling you that you are compromising your self.

Take a closer look at the forces that are pushing you away from your self. Why are you considering compromising your self? If something makes you uncomfortable, don't do it. Be true to your genuine self. Stick up for your self. Say that you're not comfortable and do whatever it takes to make your self at ease. Everything outside of you distorts you in some way. The distortion usually manipulates us further from our genuine self. Everything in the physical universe tends toward disorder. If we don't consciously clean, things get messier. If we don't consciously declare and practice who we are, life will push us further away from our true selves.

It is hard for some people to stand up for them selves, and it is equally hard for other people to allow other viewpoints at all. As with all things, we must find a balance in the moment which allows other to be themselves, while not allowing others to distort our genuine selves.

Until Tomorrow.

Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you chose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

WikiLeaks and its hacker backers need a lesson in transparency

After releasing secret US dispatches, the website WikiLeaks itself has now become the center of global attention – even triggering a cyberwar by hackers who support or oppose its whistle-blowing work.

Central to this turning of a harsh spotlight on WikiLeaks is the contention by its founder, Julian Assange, that “transparent government tends to produce just government.”

If pure openness in all public affairs is really his motive, Mr. Assange and his obscure supporters on the Internet have displayed a certain hypocrisy by not being very transparent themselves.

Until he was jailed in London on charges of sex crimes, Assange had been coy about his tactics and whereabouts. Many of his staff have abandoned him. And the computer hackers who disrupted websites like PayPal and Visa after those companies ended their business ties to WikiLeaks, did so with the utmost secrecy and revenge.

Their loopy logic goes like this: Sunshine is the best antidote to darkness – except when we need to be dark.

Secrecy in government has always been an easy target, and should be held to a minimum in free societies that still must operate against secretive foes. But those who want no secrecy at all can hardly operate in secrecy and then expect respect for their views.

The “hacktivist” group known as

Anonymous, which launched the site-damaging “Operation Payback,” did so out from a perspective that the Internet is driving all information – films, music, patents, and even government secrets – to be free. The group even hacked the site of Swedish prosecutors seeking extradition of Assange.

Certainly the Internet has challenged traditional notions of privacy, rights to the ownership of one’s creations, and the extent of confidentiality in official affairs. But most activists for Internet freedom have relied on open debate, a free flow of ideas, and respect for those who oppose them – not hurtful revenge and deceptive secrecy.

Social websites like Facebook are still struggling to balance privacy and openness. Journalists and their government sources do a well-known dance to negotiate the release of secret information. The music and film industries are coming to terms with new business models – such as Apple iTunes – that juggle the need to compensate artists with the ever-popular demand for free stuff on the Web.

Tactics matter in this ongoing debate, and acting without transparency in the name of transparency is not a tactic that contributes to solutions. Nor is cyberbullying, which is what hacking amounts to. Using the methods of anarchists on the Internet will destroy its very independence – and freedom. □

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Students, police clash as UK approves tuition hike



Britain's Prince Charles and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall react as their car is attacked, in London, Thursday, Dec. 9, 2010. In Britain's worst political violence in years, furious student protesters rained sticks and rocks on riot police, vandalized government buildings and attacked a car carrying Prince Charles and his wife, Camilla, after lawmakers approved a controversial hike in university tuition fees.

Associated Press

CASSANDRA VINOGRAD
MATT DUNHAM

Associated Press
LONDON (AP) — Furious

student protesters attacked a car carrying Prince Charles and his wife, Camilla, vandalized buildings and battled riot police Thursday as a controversial hike in university fees triggered Britain's worst political violence in years.

In a major security breach, demonstrators set upon the heir to the throne's Rolls Royce as it drove through London's busy West End on its way to a theater. A group of up to 20 struck it with fists, sticks and bottles, breaking a window and splattering the gleaming black vehicle with paint.

In the frenzy, some chanted "off with their heads!"

Adnan Nazir, a 23-year-old podiatrist who was following the protesters, said Charles, 62, kept his calm, gently pushing his 63-year-old wife toward the floor to get her out of the line of fire.

"Charles got her on the floor and put his hands on her," Nazir said. "Charles was still waving and giving the thumb's up."

"It was just a surreal thing," he said. "It was completely manic." Charles' office, Clarence House, said the royal couple was unharmed. But the attack took police completely by surprise and raises serious security questions.

The chief of the Metropolitan Police, Paul Stephenson, said the force would launch an investigation into Thursday's violence.

Prime Minister David Cameron said the violence against the royal couple was "shocking and regrettable."

"It is clear that a minority of protesters came determined

to provoke violence, attack the police and cause as much damage to property as possible," Cameron said. "They must face the full force of the law."

Police said it was unclear whether the royals had been deliberately targeted, or were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The couple arrived looking somber but composed at the London Palladium theater, where they were attending a Royal Variety Performance. Camilla later managed to shrug off the ordeal, saying there was "a first time for everything," the Press Association news agency reported.

Protesters erupted in anger after legislators in the House of Commons approved a plan to triple university fees to 9,000 pounds (\$14,000) a year.

As thousands of students were corralled by police near Parliament, some strummed guitars and sang Beatles songs — but others hurled chunks of paving stones at police and smashed windows in a government building.

Another group ran riot through the busy shopping streets of London's West End, smashing store windows and setting fire to a giant Christmas tree in Trafalgar Square.

Police condemned the "wanton vandalism." They said 43 protesters and 12 officers had

been injured, while 22 people were arrested. Police said the number of arrests would likely rise. Home Secretary Theresa May said that "what we are seeing in London tonight, the wanton vandalism, smashing of windows, has nothing to do

with peaceful protest."

The violence overshadowed the tuition vote, a crucial test for governing Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition, and for the government's austerity plans to reduce Britain's budget deficit.

It was approved 323-302 in the House of Commons, a close vote given the government's 84-seat majority.

Many in the thousands-strong crowd outside booed and chanted "shame" when they heard the result of the vote, and pressed against metal barriers and lines of riot police penning them in.

Earlier small groups of protesters threw flares, billiard balls and paint bombs, and officers, some on horses, rushed to reinforce the security cordon.

The scuffles broke out after students marched through central London and converged on Parliament Square, waving placards and chanting "education is not for sale" to cap weeks of nationwide protests aimed at pressuring lawmakers to reverse course.

The vote put Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg and his Liberal Democrat party in an awkward spot. Liberal Democrats signed a pre-election pledge to oppose any such tuition hike, and reserved the right to abstain in the vote even though they are part of the governing coalition proposing the change.

Those protesting were particularly incensed by the broken pledge from Clegg's party. "I'm here because the Liberal Democrats broke their promise," said 19-year-old Kings College student Shivan David. □



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Snow causes EU travel chaos

CRYSTAL BECERRIL

Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Travelers in Paris and Frankfurt slept at the airport after snow and ice caused travel chaos. Pop singer Shakira canceled a concert in Germany, while the French prime minister missed a gala at Moscow's Bolshoi Theater.

Many European commuters suffered through traffic jams on slushy streets Thursday, and Scotland even called in the army to clear the snow. Flights out of Paris and Frankfurt were still delayed after bad weather forced the temporary closing of airports a day earlier.

Paris, a city of frequent rain, is unprepared for snow. Amid Wednesday's snowfall of 4 inches, bus service was shut down, traffic backed up, tourists were ushered out the Eiffel Tower and Paris' Charles de Gaulle airport was forced to close for an hour and a half.

Shakira canceled a Wednesday night concert in Frankfurt because she couldn't take off from Paris, German news agency DAPD reported.

Concert organizers did not hear of the problem until an hour before the concert, when they had to tell 11,000 fans already gathered in the concert arena to head home. A spokesman for the concert organizers told DAPD that a new date for early 2011 will be set soon.

Meanwhile, French Prime Minister Francois Fillon missed a special gala by Russian and French dancers at the Bolshoi because of delays leaving France. Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin — no stranger to snow — offered to have the Bolshoi re-run the event in Fillon's honor, the RIA-Novosti news agency said.

On Thursday, delays of up to an hour persisted at Charles de Gaulle. Some passengers huddled under blankets after a long night sleeping at the airport.

"The airport last night was giving out towels, mattresses to sleep on, water, and they were coming

around constantly to see if everything was OK," said Lynne Seavor, whose flight home to Britain's East Midlands Airport was delayed by 24 hours.

The sun was out Thursday in Paris, melting snow off roofs. Sidewalks were slick, and traffic was still badly disrupted.

The Eiffel Tower's first floor reopened to tourists, a day after it was entirely shut down. Officials say they can't use salt there because it could cause damage to the monument.

A combination of snow, rain and temperatures hovering right around the freezing point caused traffic chaos in Germany, with hundreds of accidents reported nationwide and scores of miles-long traffic jams. One person died in a crash in Rhineland-Palatinate, along the French border.

Airport officials said at least 650 flights were canceled in Germany, including 200 in Berlin and 450 at Frankfurt, whose airport was shut down for four hours overnight.

Air traffic control agency Eurocontrol said Berlin's Schoenefeld airport will be closed for incoming flights until 8 a.m. on Friday as a result of a shortage of de-icing fluid.

Clariant, a Swiss specialty chemicals company that is one of Europe's top makers of the liquid, said the unexpectedly quick onset of wintry conditions had caused shortages across the continent.

"Winter has set in early and simultaneously across Europe. We even got de-icing requests from Greece today," Clariant spokesman Ulrich Nies said.

He said the company's only European production plant for the fluid in southern Germany is operating around the clock — instead of during business hours on regular days — to combat the shortages.

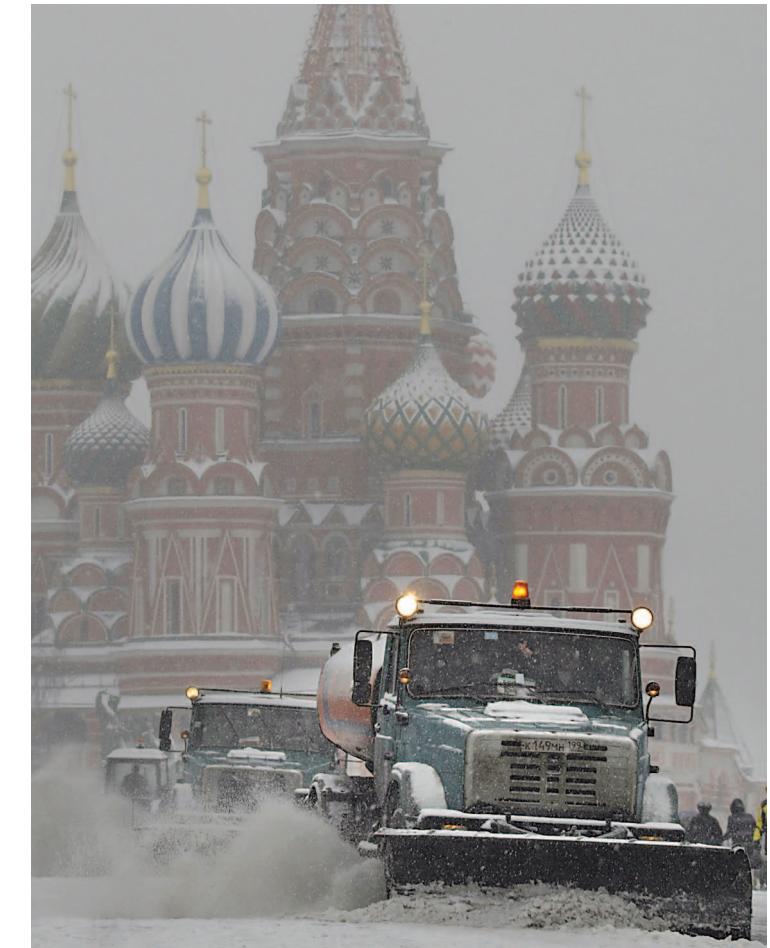
Ralf Kunkel, a Berlin airport spokesman, said the shortage of de-icing fluid was "unique" in the history of the city's airports, "and

it's absolutely annoying."

Scotland, meanwhile, called in the army Thursday to help clear snow and ice after the heaviest snowfall since 1963 paralyzed the country's capital.

Edinburgh City Council held talks with the Ministry of Defense and the Scottish government to secure help digging out the capital after up to 30 inches of snow in parts of the city left some of its most vulnerable residents unable to leave their homes. Soldiers are to aid residents in the hardest hit parts of Edinburgh and clear sensitive locations, such as hospitals and doctors' offices.

The army will also work to remove snow and ice from roads. Parts of the country have not seen a positive temperature reading for nearly two weeks. □



Municipal workers clear snow from Red Square in Moscow Thursday, Dec. 9, 2010, in front of St. Basil's Cathedral. Moscow was hit by a snow fall on Thursday.

Associated Press

Dutch inquiry: Child abuse allegations up 100-fold

MIKE CORDER

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — The head of a Dutch inquiry into child abuse in the Catholic church school system said Thursday that yearly complaints are up 100-fold since allegations emerged of worldwide abuse and recommended reforming the church organization that deals with the cases. Wim Deetman said that between 1995 and 2009 an average of 20 people each year complained to the Catholic organization Help and Law that they had been abused, but in the past year 2,000 people made such allegations. Deetman — who was asked by the Dutch Bishops' Conference to begin the independent Deetman Inquiry in March — said the organization had been swamped by the number of complaints.

He said Help and Law's structure — it was set up to help both victims and perpetrators of abuse — "hindered transparency and accountability."

Deetman recommended the church reform the organization and set up a new "Center of Expertise on Sexual Abuse in the Roman Catholic Church" to deal with complaints of abuse.

He said in an interim report that the new group should "facilitate groups of victims, enable meetings for groups of victims and also direct relatives of victims to agencies that can provide help." □

His final report is not expected until late next year.

"Transparency must be the cornerstone of a new complaints procedure," Deetman added. The directors of Help and Law said in a statement they would discuss Deetman's findings and recommendations with the Dutch Bishops' Conference and Dutch Religious Conference, adding that they were prepared to resign "to allow the organization to adjust better to the new situation."

Abuse victims have criticized Help and Law and Deetman's inquiry, saying both were set up by the Catholic church. They appealed Thursday for Deetman's commission to be replaced by a parliamentary inquiry into Catholic abuse.

"We demand justice, the right to an independent investigation," Bert Smeets of the victims group Mea Culpa wrote on the group's website.

Deetman, however, insisted Thursday his inquiry is independent.

He also recommended the church set up a "collective settlement" for victims seeking compensation and look at compensating victims even if the statute of limitations had expired.

The Bishops' Conference and Religious Conference, two groups which represent clergy and other Catholic workers, said they would study Deetman's recommendations and how to implement them. □

Rights groups report Iran stoning woman released



In this photo released by state-run Press TV, Iranian 43-year-old Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani, who had been sentenced to death by stoning for adultery, attends an interview with Press TV, in the city of Tabriz, northwestern Iran, Sunday, Dec. 5, 2010.

Associated Press

TEHRAN (Reuters) – A European human rights group said on Thursday an Iranian woman who had been sentenced to death by stoning had been freed, but there was no confirmation from Iran.

The International Committee Against Stoning, based in Germany, said it had heard from “sources in Iran” that Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani had been freed.

Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini welcomed the “excellent news” although the ministry said the comment was based on the committee’s report which it was trying to verify.

Ashtiani was sentenced to stoning for adultery -- the only crime which carries that penalty under Iran’s Islamic law. Following an international outcry, officials said that sentence had been suspended but that she could still be hanged for complicity in her husband’s murder.

Fuelling speculation of Ashtiani’s freedom was a trailer broadcast on Iran’s state-run English language Press TV advertising a program to be broadcast at midnight (2030 GMT) on Friday about Ashtiani. It did not indicate she had been freed.

Press TV also released photographs of Ashtiani and her adult son Sajjad Ghaderzadeh -- who has also been in detention since meeting German reporters in October -- which it said were taken ahead of an interview which will form part of the program.

In one picture they are holding hands and looking unsmilingly at each other. In another they stand in the yard of her home in Oskou, 570 km (354 miles) northwest of Tehran, again with neutral expressions. There was no indication of when the pictures were taken. Press TV was not immediately available for comment and there was no word from Iranian officials.

Ashtiani has appeared on Iranian TV before. In an interview broadcast in August she described her relationship with the man who murdered her husband. Her words were voiced over in the main Iranian language Farsi as she speaks a regional dialect and her face was blurred.

The International Committee Against Stoning said on November 2 it had learned Ashtiani would be hanged the next day, but that did not happen.

Last month, the head of Iran’s Council of Human Rights said he thought there was “a good chance that her life could be saved.” The case has worsened relations between Iran and the West, already seriously damaged by a dispute over Tehran’s disputed nuclear program.

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva offered asylum to Ashtiani in July, prompting a public rejection of his offer by Iran. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has said the stoning sentence was a fabrication by a hostile foreign media. □

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On Top Of The News E-mail:news@arubatoday.com Website:www.arubatoday.com Tel:582-7800 Friday, December 10, 2010

East is the beast, West is wretched in NFL

By ARNIE STAPLETON

AP Pro Football Writer

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. – Head West, young man, and leave behind any notions of finding good football.

Only one of the 11 NFL teams west of the Mississippi owns a winning record heading into the final four weeks of this oddball season — not counting New Orleans, which straddles the river that serves as the league's very own continental divide.

Yet, in this wild and wretched West, the only team that's already been eliminated from the playoff race is the Denver Broncos (3-9), who were vexed by an embarrassing videotape violation and a bad personnel moves that led to too many losses and cost coach Josh McDaniels his job this week.

Even the region's lone winners, the Kansas City Chiefs (8-4), have dealt with a fair amount of drama, from coach Todd Haley's handshake snub of McDaniels last month to quarterback Matt Cassel's emergency appendectomy on Wednesday.

The Chiefs might have to make their playoff push with quarterback Brodie Croyle, who is 0-9 as an NFL starter, beginning Sunday at San Diego, where the Chargers (6-6) are no longer December's darlings. The Chargers' loss last week to Oakland damaged the playoff hopes for the four-time defending AFC West champions and snapped their streak of 18 straight December victories.

Continued on Page B6

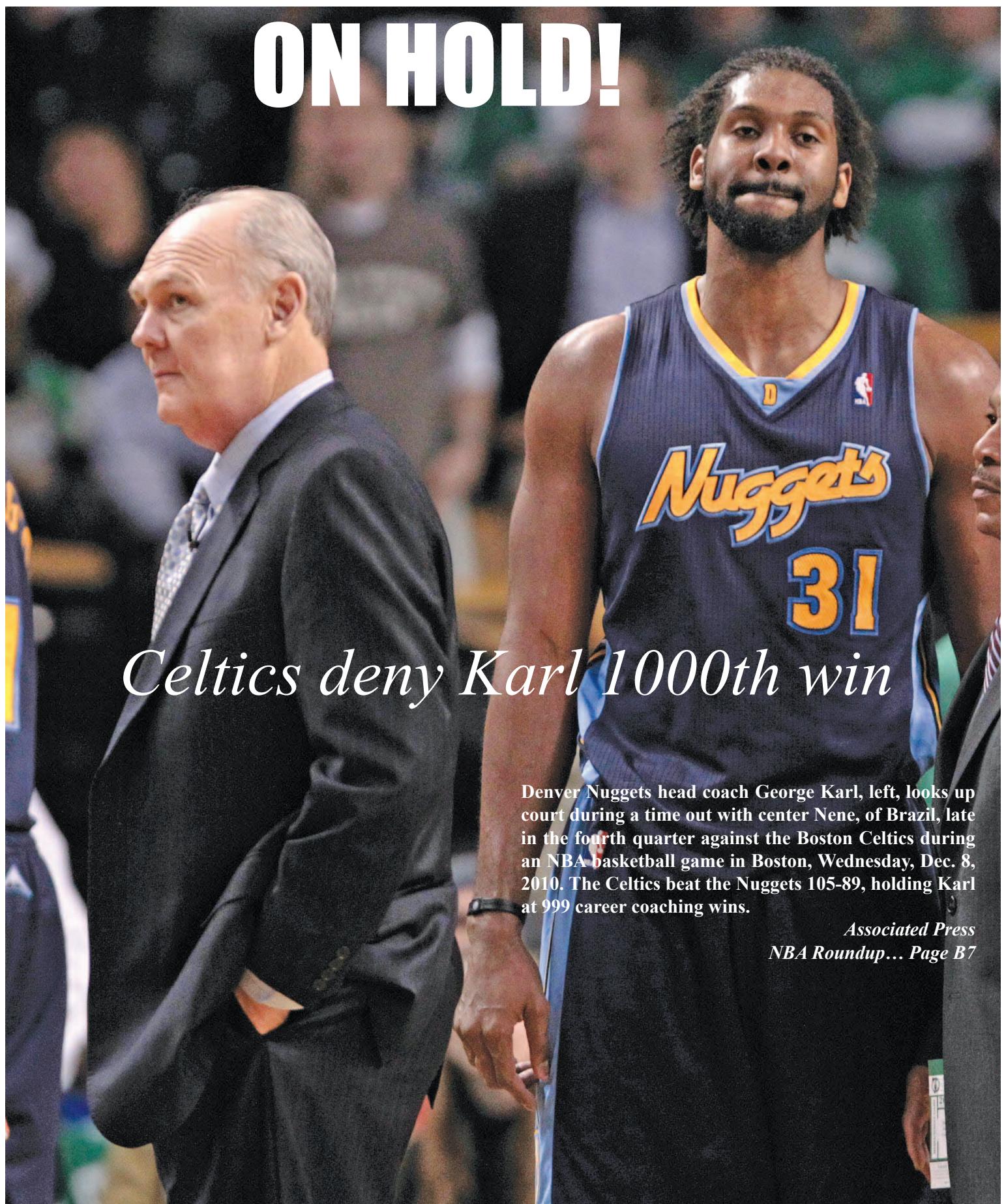


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Celtics deny Karl 1000th win

Denver Nuggets head coach George Karl, left, looks up court during a time out with center Nene, of Brazil, late in the fourth quarter against the Boston Celtics during an NBA basketball game in Boston, Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2010. The Celtics beat the Nuggets 105-89, holding Karl at 999 career coaching wins.

Associated Press

NBA Roundup... Page B7

FBI looks into NCAA issues under Agent Act

Auburn quarterback Cam Newton (2) is interviewed after defeating South Carolina in the SEC championship NCAA college football game at the Georgia Dome, Saturday, Dec. 4, 2010, in Atlanta.



Page B4

U.S. PGA Tour understands that youth must be served



Tiger Woods, left, looks on along with Rory McIlroy, of Northern Ireland, after teeing off on the first hole during the second round of the Chevron World Challenge golf tournament at Sherwood Country Club, Friday, Dec. 3, 2010, in Thousand Oaks, Calif.

Associated Press

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

JACKSONVILLE, Florida (AP) — Coming off its first year without Tiger Woods winning a tournament, the U.S. PGA Tour will be leaning on its next generation of players to promote the 2011 season.

Commissioner Tim Finchem said he could not recall greater interest in such a big group of newcomers and other young players in his previous 17 years running the U.S. tour.

Among those in their 20s, Dustin Johnson played in the final group of two majors, Rickie Fowler became the first tour rookie to be selected for the Ryder Cup team and golf had two players in their 20s (Louis Oosthuizen, Martin Kaymer) win majors for the first time since 2001. Also starring was Rory McIlroy and Ryo Ishikawa, who are not tour members but will play at least six times in America.

"I think the takeaway on the competition side of 2010,

more than anything else, was the tremendous interest in young players coming up," Finchem said during a conference call on Thursday. "I've never in my tenure seen so much buzz and interest about rookies and young players creating exciting performances. Actually, it has led us to conclude that we really need to focus on that dynamic as we go into 2011." Finchem said youth will be "our primary promotional focus" because it makes for good theater.

Woods still will command much of the attention next season, which begins in one month at the Tournament of Champions in Hawaii. Woods, who hasn't played at Kapalua since 2005, wasn't eligible this year.

It was his first year as a pro when he didn't win a single tournament.

Finchem would not say if he expects Woods to play more in 2011, although he has a feeling

that other top players might be adding more tournaments to their schedule.

Off the course, perhaps the most critical component to the new year will be negotiating a new U.S. TV contract. The six-year deal with the two networks expires in 2012.

Golf is coming off a year of low U.S. TV ratings, mainly because Woods played only six times in America, and didn't play very well.

It also was hurt during the Vancouver Olympics, and Finchem said NFL ratings in September were at an all-time high.

Critical to the negotiations is having title sponsors in place, an area where the tour has done well in a tough economy. It found new title sponsors this year for tournaments at Kapalua, Phoenix, Miami, San Diego, Sea Island and Malaysia. Finchem said 30 percent of the tour's title sponsors are signed up beyond 2012, which would put them

in the next TV contract. The other business question for the year is whether Finchem decides to stay.

His six-year contract with the tour is to expire in 2012, and Finchem said he would need to notify the board this year if he plans to retire. It doesn't sound as though he's interested in leaving.

"I've often said my goal is to die in office, and I assume I'm not going to die in a couple of years," he said.

"I'm pretty much where I've always been on this — as long as the players are happy with the direction we are going and the job I'm doing; as long as my energy level is sufficient to handle what's involved; as long as our team here is comfortable with my leadership, then I will most likely be open to staying. But those are three big ifs. I have an open mind at this point, but I'm certainly not in the position of campaigning for it." □

Hall leads Ladies Dubai Masters after second round

MICHAEL CASEY,

AP Sports Writer

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Lydia Hall of Wales, looking for her first top-five finish on the European Tour, shot a 5-under 67 Thursday to take a one-shot lead over Anna Nordqvist of Sweden in the second round of the Dubai Ladies Masters.

Michelle Wie fell further off the pace, hitting a 72 to lie six shots back after missing several birdie putts.

Hall, whose father played for the Wales rugby team, was in eighth place after the first round and wasn't expected to make a run at the leaderboard. But she hit a 31 on the front nine, including five birdies, to move to the top at the season-ending tournament.

She went into the water on the ninth hole and then three-putted on No. 10 for another bogey before making birdies on her final two holes to regain the lead at 7-under 137. "I just played really solid, approaches within 15 feet

on the front nine," said the 23-year-old Hall, who is ranked 396th in the world. "I was really pleased. I made a couple of mistakes on 9 and 10, and three-putted on 10. I kind of refocused and moved onto 11 and made a good putt and kept doing it."

Nordqvist made four birdies in a bogey-free round of 68 to sit one shot ahead of Danish veteran Iben Tinning, who has said she will retire after this tournament.

Tinning bogeyed the last two holes to lose a share of the lead, but remains in the hunt for a sixth career tour victory and first since 2005. Struggling with a long-standing hip injury, the 36-year-old Tinning said it would be "indescribable" to win in her final tournament.

"I'm not saying I don't feel anything out there and definitely going for more pins," Tinning said. "Why be a chicken at your last event?"

Three players are a further shot back at 4 under, including



Russia's Maria Verchenova who needs a top-20 finish to retain her European Tour card. She is tied with England's Melissa Reid and Norway's Marianne Skarpnord.

Meanwhile, England's Laura Davies all but conceded the Order of Merit for the top women's golfer in Europe to South Africa's Lee-Anne Pace after shooting a 73 to go to 4 over for the tournament. Davies needs to finish in the top two to overtake Pace.

"I didn't play well again today. The timing is all out," said Davies, who complained of fatigue after the first day. □

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Red Sox get Crawford, Yankees raise offer to Lee

By BEN WALKER
AP Baseball Writer

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Immediately after the Red Sox landed Carl Crawford, the Yankees boosted their already whopping offer to Cliff Lee. Their high-stakes rivalry is escalating, hundreds of millions of dollars by the hour. The other teams in the majors? They can only marvel at Big Boys Gone Wild.

"I've never played in those poker games," Arizona Diamondbacks general manager Kevin Towers said Thursday. "It's a different pool of players we focus on and look at. I hear about it and kind of move on."

Too bad for Andy MacPhail, Baltimore's president of baseball operations. His Orioles play in the same AL East as the Yankees and Red Sox.

"I want to form the Mid-Atlantic Division," he said, totally kidding.

Not everyone is out the mix, though. The Texas Rangers, eager to re-sign Lee, went to pay him a visit in Arkansas. Still no timetable when the prize pitcher might make a decision on where to play in 2011.

"He's a premier free agent," Yankees general manager Brian Cashman said. "He's worth waiting for."

The winter meetings wrapped

up Thursday after a brisk session full of trades and signings. The Baltimore Orioles made one more deal before leaving the Disney resort, getting shortstop J.J. Hardy from Minnesota.

Typically, several trades follow in the days after teams return home. Kansas City will certainly get pitches for former Cy Young winner Zack Greinke, and the New York Mets have been listening to offers for outfielder Carlos Beltran.

In the biggest shifts of the week, Crawford and Adrian Gonzalez joined the Red Sox, Jayson Werth went to Washington, Carlos Pena moved to the Chicago Cubs and Paul Konerko stayed with the White Sox.

Derek Jeter, meanwhile, completed his deal with the Yankees and admitted he was angry with how the team handled talks.

Mark Reynolds, J.J. Putz, Shaun Marcum, Jeff Francoeur and Melky Cabrera also found new places to play. The Tampa Bay Rays, a playoff team last season, didn't fare so well — as expected, the cost of doing business cost them Crawford and Pena, and shortstop Jason Bartlett might get traded to San Diego, too. Boston general manager Theo Epstein wouldn't directly confirm Crawford's deal for

\$142 million and seven years. "If things come together the way we hope and expect, we'll be really satisfied," he said. Predictably, the Yankees quickly raised the ante for their No. 1 target, offering Lee a seven-year contract. That's up from a six-year proposal worth nearly \$140 million. A person familiar with the Crawford deal told The Associated Press that his agreement was subject to passing a physical. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal was not yet complete.

"You go into every winter with a Plan A, and sometimes it's hard to pull that off and you move on to Plan B and C," Epstein said. "I think adding an impact player was very important for where we were in the short-, medium- and long-term and adding two, as long as they were the right players in the right spots in the right situations, would be even better."

A person with knowledge of the negotiations told the AP about the increased offer to Lee, without disclosing the dollar amount. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the talks are ongoing.

The speedy Crawford is a four-time All-Star and just won his first Gold Glove. He hit .307 with 19 home runs,



an AL-leading 13 triples and 90 RBIs for Tampa Bay last season. He scored 110 runs and stole 47 bases.

if things came together the right way, we could be pretty aggressive on a couple players we really liked."

A dynamic player at 29, he has spent his entire major league career with the Rays. He is the franchise leader in several categories, including hits, RBIs, runs and steals.

Gonzalez, an All-Star slugger and Gold Glove first baseman, came in a trade with the Padres.

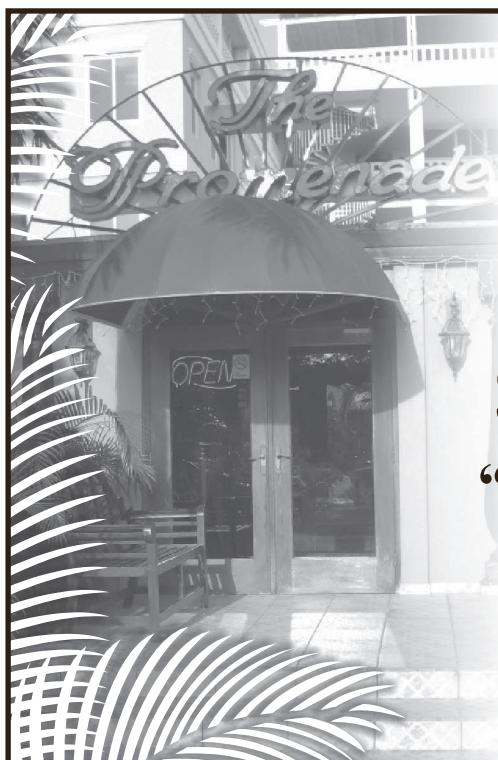
"We did this objectively over months and months and months," Epstein said. "We realized there was a shot

if things came together the right way, we could be pretty aggressive on a couple players we really liked."

The Yankees never made an offer to Crawford, even though Cashman had dinner with him Tuesday night.

"It's a great player. A great move," Cashman said.

"They've had two huge acquisitions. They're loading up like they always do, and this is even more significant than a typical Red Sox reload. So they've done a great job so far." □



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Law enforcement probes NCAA issues under Agent Act



In this Dec. 4, 2010, file photo, Auburn quarterback Cameron Newton (2) reacts near the end of the Southeastern Conference Championship NCAA college football game against South Carolina at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta. Newton is among the four finalists for the Heisman Trophy.

By DAVID BRANDT
AP Sports Writer

While Cam Newton is crisscrossing the country

Associated Press

picking up postseason awards, representatives of the Mississippi secretary of state's office are heading to Illinois

to interview the man at the center of the infamous pay-for-play scandal involving the quarterback.

The officials want to talk with Kenny Rogers to see if Agent Act laws were violated during Newton's recruitment. Rogers, the former Mississippi State player who the NCAA ruled assisted Newton's father with the failed payment scheme to get his son to sign with that school, is scheduled to meet with officials Thursday in Waukegan, Ill.

"We'll certainly cooperate and answer whatever questions they ask," said Doug Zeit, Rogers' attorney and whose offices are in Waukegan. "Kenny Rogers isn't hiding anything from anybody." The ongoing Newton investigation has involved

everyone from the NCAA to the FBI, though the Auburn quarterback has been cleared to play by the NCAA as the top-ranked Tigers (13-0) prepare to face No. 2 Oregon (12-0) for the national championship on Jan. 10.

The Agent Act has been on the books for years, though it's rare for anyone to be prosecuted.

An Associated Press review this summer found that more than half of the 42 states with sports agent laws had yet to revoke or suspend a single license, or invoke penalties of any sort.

However, the Newton case — along with the high-profile case engulfing the North Carolina football program — has prompted state-level officials to be more aggressive in investigating alleged improper athlete-agent relationships.

The Mississippi secretary of state's office enforces regulations under the Uniform Athlete Agent Act, which governs sports agents. Violators in Mississippi face up to two years in prison and a \$10,000 fine, along with additional civil penalties, though penalties vary state to state.

The Agent Act requires agents to register with the state, and prohibits them from giving anything of value directly or indirectly to a student-athlete. The act also requires sports agents to notify university officials if a contract has been made with an athlete.

But it's a law that really hasn't been enforced recently.

Pamela Weaver, a spokeswoman for the Mississippi secretary of state's office, said no one has been

prosecuted under the Uniform Agent Act over the past three years. Weaver said Rogers is not a registered agent in Mississippi.

Rogers, who previously worked for NFL agent Ian Greengross, has said that he met with Cam's father, Cecil Newton, and two Mississippi State assistant coaches at the Hilton Garden Inn in Starkville, Miss., on Nov. 27, 2009, where Newton said it would take up to \$180,000 to secure his son's commitment to Mississippi State. The coaches reportedly declined the solicitation.

Bus Cook, a certified agent in Mississippi who represents about 25 current NFL players, said he supports the Athlete Agent Act. But he acknowledges that enforcement would be difficult.

"I'm absolutely all for it," Cook said. "But who is going to enforce it? The secretary of state doesn't have the manpower to run around looking for people violating the act. So that means it falls on other agents or the universities to turn people in. That makes it difficult."

Universities might not be eager to file complaints against violators. By opening up cases to the secretary of state or other law enforcement, there could be unsavory details revealed that when a person must testify under oath.

"Once you open that door," Cook said, "it's awfully hard to shut it." The North Carolina secretary of state's office is continuing its investigation, which launched in July shortly after news of the NCAA investigation at North Carolina became public. □

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Tyson heads to boxing hall alive and well

By TIM DAHLBERG,
AP Sports Columnist

Mike Tyson and I were sitting around a few months back, talking about life.

His life, that is, a subject Tyson seems to find almost as fascinating as a lot of other people do.

"When I was younger I thought I was going to destroy myself," Tyson told me. "I'm very grateful I made it to this place in my life."

That place is a far different place than I ever imagined Tyson to be in the years I spent covering his career. By this time I figured he would be in prison, homeless or off by himself tending to pigeons somewhere.

Actually, I figured he would be dead.

Stabbed in a strip club, shot by a jealous husband. Perhaps overdosed on cocaine.

But dead, long before he confronted middle age. Like Tyson, I was convinced he would destroy himself.

Instead, in a development just as stunning as Tyson losing to Buster Douglas, he has launched a second career the old Iron Mike never would have recognized.

Now the 44-year-old is heading to the International Boxing Hall of Fame.

Cue the jokes now, but there's no truth to the rumor his bust will be placed next to a bronze replica of Evander Holyfield's ear.

He'll be there because he once was truly was the baddest man on the planet.

OK, so the bar for entry in the boxing hall isn't set all that high. Proof was the announcement that actor Sylvester Stallone is joining Tyson as one of the 12 members of next year's class. Unless you were around when Tyson reigned as the heavyweight champion of the world, it's hard to imagine just how big he was. It's also hard to imagine how troubled he was, though the tabloids of the late '80s and early '90s were filled with daily reminders of the difficulties he had outside the ring living up to what he did inside the ring.

"I got intoxicated with

myself," Tyson said. "I didn't know how empty I was as champ."

I was sitting at ringside the night Tyson knocked out Trevor Berbick in the second round at the Las Vegas Hilton to become the youngest heavyweight champion ever. Later that night I watched as the fearsome 20-year-old paraded proudly around the casino with the gaudy WBC title belt wrapped around his waist.

Nearly a quarter century later Tyson is drawing laughs appearing in movies and videos that parody his former self. But there was nothing funny about the man-child who was at the same time both frightening and fascinating.

If this were another hall of fame, Tyson would have no chance of getting in. He served time behind bars for both rape and assault, narrowly missed another prison term after being caught with cocaine in Arizona and generally behaved so badly over the years that normal society wouldn't want anything to do

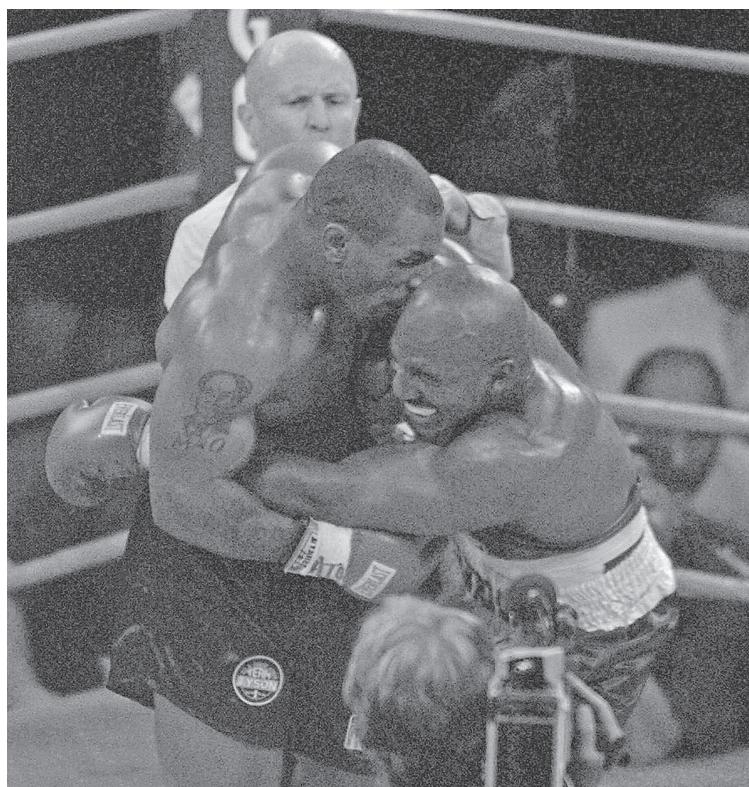
with him. But this is boxing, not baseball. And no one who watched Tyson viciously pummel opponents in his prime would ever question his place among the sport's all-time greats.

His prime didn't last long, a little over three years before Douglas exposed him as a one-trick fighter in Japan. But promoters were still selling Tyson a decade later to boxing fans who didn't understand that he was simply going through the motions to make another payday.

"You become a freak, so to speak," he told me. "People stare at you and you don't understand why the average person looks at you like you're someone special."

Tyson is remarkably good at analyzing himself and harshly candid when it comes to talking about his shortcomings. He's every psychiatrist's dream patient, and every talk show host's dream guest.

It's been five years since an out-of-shape and disinterested Tyson was knocked out in his final fight by Kevin McBride,



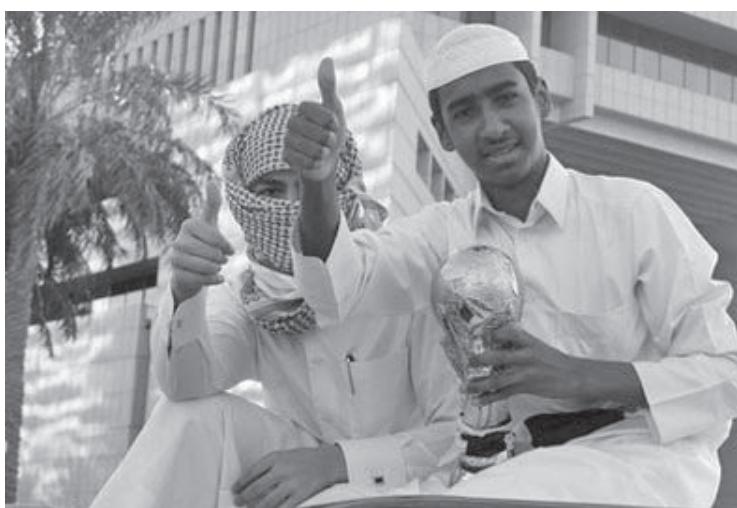
This June 28, 1997, file photo shows Mike Tyson biting into the ear of Evander Holyfield in the third round of their WBA heavyweight match in Las Vegas. Tyson, whose meteoric rise to the pinnacle of boxing and stunning fall from grace was legendary, was selected Tuesday, Dec. 7, 2010, for induction into the International Boxing Hall of Fame and Museum.

Associated Press

journeyman heavyweight who wouldn't have lasted a round with him in his heyday. He's now approaching middle age and seems to have finally shed

at least some of the demons that constantly tormented him. Iron Mike is now Hall of Famer Mike. Alive and surprisingly well. □

IOC president urges Mideast bid for Olympics



Qatars hold a mock World Cup trophy as they celebrate in Doha Friday, Dec. 3, 2010 a day after the world football's governing body FIFA announced that the tiny Gulf state will host the 2022 World Cup.

Associated Press

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MUSCAT, Oman – International Olympic Committee President Jacques Rogge said Thursday he would like to see another Middle Eastern bid for the games.

"There is an interest in certain Middle Eastern countries for the games and we would welcome their bids," said Rogge, while observing the Asian Beach Games on the shores of the Arabian Sea in Oman.

His comments came a week after FIFA awarded the 2022 World Cup to the tiny Gulf nation of Qatar, which made an unsuccessful bid for the 2016 Olympics.

Qatar's surprise win over heavyweight rivals, including the United States, was seen as evidence of the growing interest to blaze new ground with the world's biggest sporting events.

The 2016 Olympics in Rio will mark the first time the event is held in South America. This year's World Cup in South Africa was its debut on the continent.

Rogge did not name a specific Mideast city as a possible Olympic candidate, but said there are several sites in the region capable of "good and well organized" bids. □

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**NFL****Continued from Page B1**

The Cardinals know the feeling; they've lost seven straight games after going 10-6 last year.

"I love the game, but it does wear on you," Cardinals receiver Larry Fitzgerald said. "You get tired of losing."

Some teams actually view the mediocrity as progress.

The Raiders, Seahawks and Rams — all 6-6 — have already surpassed last year's win total.

The Rams' six wins matches the number of games they won the previous three years combined and they own the tiebreaker over the Seahawks atop the NFC West.

This is the Raiders' best year since 2002, but they've had their torments, too, like Sebastian Janikowski missing a 32-yard field goal at the end of a 24-23 loss at Arizona

and Richard Seymour's ejection for slapping Ben Roethlisberger.

Seattle is playing .500 ball even though it ranks 28th in the NFL in total offense, 30th in rush offense, 30th in total defense and 30th in pass defense.

"Some games our numbers are horrible and some games are numbers are pretty darn good," coach Pete Carroll said. "That inconsistency has left us so that statistics aren't very important this year."

All that matters is the rest of the West isn't all that good, either.

The Texans (5-7), Vikings (5-7), Cowboys (4-8), 49ers (4-8) and even the Cardinals (3-9) are still mathematically, if not realistically, alive in the playoff hunt.

Like the Broncos, the Vikings and Cowboys made coaching changes in the last month. The

Cowboys fired Wade Phillips on Nov. 8 and promoted Jason Garrett to interim coach, and two weeks later, the Vikings fired Brad Childress and promoted Leslie Frazier to replace him.

The two new coaches have a combined 5-1 record since taking over, and the Broncos are hoping Eric Studesville, who was promoted from running backs coach, can inject some life into the team to close out this lost season.

Besting the Broncos in the drama department is the mess in Minnesota, where the Vikings briefly got back together with Randy Moss after begging Brett Favre to come back only to realize he brought more baggage than luggage.

Favre's season has been filled with injuries, interceptions and insults over a sordid tale of alleged inappropriate photos and phone messages he allegedly sent in 2008 to Jenn Sterger, the former New York Jets game hostess who wants the league to discipline the three-time MVP before his career ends.

Favre has said this season will be his last. The Vikings host the New York Giants this weekend, with Favre's status uncertain because of a sprained throwing shoulder. He has started 297 straight regular season games, an all-time record.

"It's just a whirlwind. We've had highs. We've had lows.

We've had crazy news. We've had regular news," Vikings receiver Greg Camarillo said. "Even when there's no news there always seems to be something to make the news." Don't the Cowboys know that. With Jerry Jones hosting the Super Bowl at his palace near Dallas, the Cowboys owner spoke openly about becoming the first team to play for the Lombardi Trophy in its own backyard. And it seemed realistic. The Cowboys were coming off a division title and their first playoff win since 1996.

It quickly unraveled with a 1-4 start and then quarterback Tony Romo went down with a broken collarbone. The losses became more lopsided and Jones was forced to fire Wade. Dallas is 3-1 since Garrett took over with the only loss a narrow one to the reigning champion Saints (9-3), whose practice headquarters and Superdome home are on the east bank of the Mississippi River, making them one of the East's beasts.

San Diego's formula of slow starts and fast finishes hit a speed bump this year.

The Chargers' big problems have been spectacular special teams breakdowns — they've had five punts blocked — and two dozen turnovers, seven more than all of last season.

The 49ers have been beset by injuries, most notably Frank Gore's season-ending hip ailment, and an array of

departures. Offensive coordinator Jimmy Raye was fired after Week 3 following problems getting plays into quarterback Alex Smith on time. Before the year began with big hopes of winning the NFC West, second-year running back Glen Coffee retired and defensive lineman Kentwan Balmer was a no-show before the Niners traded him. This week, assistant head coach Johnnie Lynn resigned for personal reasons.

Alex Smith separated his non-throwing left shoulder in October and sat out a total of five games — some once he was healthy again — while Troy Smith got a shot. Coach Mike Singletary is going back to Alex Smith against Seattle on Sunday.

The Texans came into the season boldly talking about challenging Indianapolis for supremacy in the AFC South. But Houston coach Gary Kubiak's gamble to start rookie Kareem Jackson and second-year pro Glover Quin at the cornerback spots has backfired in a big way.

Quin made the biggest gaffe of all against Jacksonville on Nov. 14, batting a 50-yard desperation pass on the final play right into the hands of Mike Thomas, who stepped across the goal line for the winning score in the Jaguars' stunning 31-24 victory.

It's been that kind of year in the wretched West. □

Lead NFL negotiator: 18-game season key to talks

By HOWARD FENDRICH

AP Pro Football Writer

NEW YORK — The head of the NFL's negotiating team says it will be much easier to reach a new labor agreement with the players' union if the accord includes an 18-game regular season. "It's something that both sides recognize the value of, and so both sides will work hard to incorporate it into the new agreement," NFL executive vice president of labor and chief counsel Jeff Pash said Thursday in an interview with The Associated Press.

Pash also said the league is "focused on a full 2011 season" and the owners want to have a deal in place "well before" the summer.

The current collective bargaining agreement expires in March, and the union's executive director, DeMaurice Smith, has said he believes owners are preparing for a lockout. In

a letter sent to players last week, Smith advised members to save their last three game checks in case next season is canceled. The NFL has not missed games because of labor problems since 1987, when the players went on strike.

"If both sides are equally committed and equally focused," Pash said, "then there's no reason why we can't get an agreement."

Pash doesn't have a drop-dead date in mind for getting a deal done in time to avoid missing games.

"I haven't even begun to think about it," he said, "because we're focused on getting an agreement. We're focused on a full 2011 season. That's where our head is."

Asked whether the season could be played if there is not a new CBA in place until the summer, Pash replied: "The goal is to have an agreement well before that." □

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SP NEW
daily: 5:45 - 8:30
matinee: 12:45 - 3:15
late show: 11:00

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SP NEW
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matinee: 11:30
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NBA Roundup

Karl stuck on 999 wins; Celtics beat Denver 105-89

BOSTON (AP) — Ray Allen scored 28 points Wednesday as the Boston Celtics took advantage of an injury to Carmelo Anthony and won their eighth straight game, beating the Denver Nuggets 105-89.

The loss left Nuggets coach George Karl stuck on 999 wins. His next chance to reach 1,000 comes Friday at Toronto.

Kevin Garnett had 17 points and nine rebounds, and Rajon Rondo added 13 assists for Boston. Paul Pierce scored 17 and Glen "Big Baby" Davis, who had been ill during the week, had 16 points.

Reserve guard Ty Lawson scored 24 for Denver, and Arron Afflalo added 16 points. At Salt Lake City, LeBron James scored 33 points and Dwyane Wade added 28 as the surging Miami outscored Utah by 14 in the fourth quarter.

The victory extended Miami's winning streak to six, and avenged a 116-114 overtime loss to Utah at home on Nov. 9. The Heat improved to 15-8, while Utah fell to 16-7.

Al Jefferson scored 25 points for Utah, while Paul Millsap had 18 and Deron Williams

had 21.

Lakers 87, Clippers 86

At Los Angeles, Derek Fisher hit a layup at the buzzer to give the Los Angeles Lakers a victory over the Clippers after the two-time defending NBA champions trailed for most of the second half.

Kobe Bryant scored 24 points, Shannon Brown added 16 and Pau Gasol had 10 points and 10 rebounds for the Lakers, who ended a three-game road losing streak as the visiting team in their own building.

Eric Gordon scored 24 points and Blake Griffin had 16 points and 11 rebounds for the Clippers, who blew a 12-point lead in the third quarter.

At New York, Raymond Felton's tiebreaking 3-pointer bounced on the rim five times and finally went in with 2.7 seconds left, giving New York a victory over Toronto that extended its winning streak to six.

Amare Stoudemire pushed his 30-point streak to six games in sensational fashion, scoring 18 of his 34 points in the fourth quarter and grabbing 14 rebounds. His jumper gave New York a 110-107 lead with 57 seconds remaining and

sparked "MVP!" chants at Madison Square Garden.

Andrea Bargnani had a career-high 41 points but wasn't close on a desperation 3 pointer just before the buzzer in the Raptors' third straight loss. Danilo Gallinari scored 20 for the Knicks.

At Cleveland, Derrick Rose scored 29 points, including a three-point play that put Chicago ahead for good with 19.6 seconds to play, as the Bulls handed Cleveland its sixth straight loss.

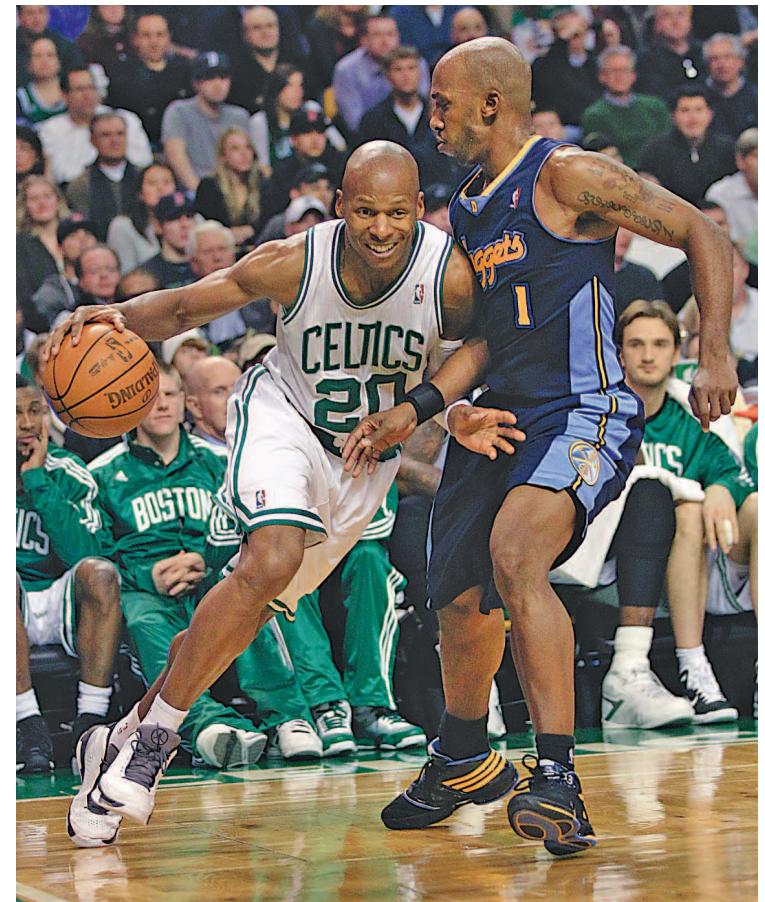
The losing streak matches Cleveland's longest since it dropped six in a row from Nov. 28 to Dec. 8, 2007.

Luol Deng and Joakim Noah had 13 points apiece for Chicago, which has won three straight.

At Milwaukee, Andrew Bogut tipped in an inbounds pass from Luc Richard Mbah a Moute as time expired, lifting Milwaukee over Indiana.

With 0.5 seconds left, Mbah a Moute made a perfect pass that just missed the rim, but allowed Bogut to deflect it in for the winning points.

In other NBA games it was
Boston 105, Denver 89;
Chicago 88, Cleveland 83;



Boston Celtics guard Ray Allen, left, drives to the basket against Denver Nuggets guard Chauncey Billups during the second quarter of an NBA basketball game in Boston, Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2010. Allen had 28 points in the Celtics' 105-89 win.

Associated Press

New York 113, Toronto 110; Milwaukee 97, Indiana 95; Oklahoma City 111, Minnesota 103; New Orleans 93, Detroit 74; San Antonio 111, Golden State 94; Memphis 104, Phoenix 98, OT; Miami 111, Utah 98; Sacramento 116, Washington 91; and L.A. Lakers 87, L.A. Clippers 86. □



Belgium's Kim Clijsters, right, reacts with Belgium's Justine Henin, after Clijsters won the Diamond Games exhibition match in Antwerp, Belgium, Thursday, Dec. 9, 2010.

Associated Press

**RAF CASERT,
AP Sports Writer**

ANTWERP, Belgium (AP) — Kim Clijsters and Justine Henin are considering playing doubles together at the 2012 London Olympics.

The Belgian stars said at a joint press conference on Thursday

they are open to the idea but need to overcome scheduling difficulties.

"Obviously for the Olympics, it would be beautiful," U.S. Open champion Clijsters said, adding 2012 could also be her last full competitive season. "It would be nice to go out in

Henin-Clijsters considering '12 London Olympic doubles

such a way."

Clijsters has never competed at the Olympics while Henin won the 2004 Olympic singles gold in Athens.

The pair have admitted in the past they are not close friends, but before their exhibition match on Thursday, Henin said they were keen to compete as a pair in 2012.

"There is a real willingness to be there. We can already think about it. Everything is open to consider this," Henin said as she prepared to play a match for the first time since injuring her elbow at Wimbledon. Clijsters won the exhibition match in a super tiebreak 10-5 after she won the first set 6-1 and Henin the second 6-3.

Henin and Clijsters have only once played doubles together at the highest level, when Belgium lost to Russia in the 2006 Fed Cup quarterfinals.

In 1999, they paired up twice in minor tournaments just as their careers were taking off. They could face tough competition in 2012 from the 2000 and 2008 gold medalists Venus and Serena Williams, who, if healthy, will be difficult to beat on the grass of Wimbledon.

Clijsters' and Henin's careers have followed similar paths. Both reached the No. 1 ranking before retiring suddenly and then making a comeback. Clijsters, 27, was named the WTA player of the year in

2010 after winning the U.S. Open for the second year in a row and four other titles.

Henin, 28, returned at the beginning of the season but had her encouraging comeback cut short at Wimbledon when she fell and tore a ligament in her elbow during a fourth-round match — against Clijsters.

"For sure, I'm still not 100 percent," Henin said of her fitness. "But if I realize where I came from, I am lucky and happy to be where I am now. I thought at some time, that I would never get back."

She plans to begin her preparations for the Australian Open by playing at the Hopman Cup at the beginning of January. □

NHL Roundup

Crosby scores 2, Pens win 11th straight 5-2

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Sidney Crosby scored twice during his fourth multiple-goal game in his last six as the Pittsburgh Penguins won their 11th game in a row, beating the Toronto Maple Leafs 5-2 on Wednesday.

The Penguins are on the second-longest winning streak in franchise history. Their only longer run was an NHL-record 17-game streak during a 119-point season in 1993.

Crosby has 20 goals and 15 assists during a 17-game scoring streak that is two shy of his career best, and has 14 goals during Pittsburgh's winning streak. Crosby also has nine goals in the last four home games. He also has at least one goal in 13 of 17 games, and leads the NHL with 26 goals and 50 points in 30 games.

Chris Kunitz had three assists for Pittsburgh, and Mark Letestu scored twice after going 22 games without a goal. Pascal Dupuis also scored. Tyler Bozak and Mikhail Grabovski scored for Toronto.

Sharks 5, Flyers 4, SO

At Philadelphia, Logan Couture and Ryane Clowe scored shootout goals to lift San Jose past Philadelphia



Pittsburgh Penguins' Sidney Crosby (87) watches his second goal of the night past Toronto Maple Leafs goalie Jonas Gustavsson (50) in the second period of the NHL hockey game Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2010, in Pittsburgh.

after the Sharks overcame a three-goal, third-period deficit and an apparent Flyers goal in overtime.

The Flyers appeared to win it in overtime, but Mike Richards' goal was waved off after a replay showed time expired an instant before the puck crossed the line.

Clowe and Couture also scored in regulation, and Jason Demers and Joe Pavelski added goals for San Jose. Scott Hartnell, Claude Giroux, Ville

Leino and Nikolay Zherdev scored for Philadelphia.

Canucks 5, Ducks 4, SO

At Vancouver, British Columbia, Ryan Kesler scored his second goal in a scramble with 21.5 seconds left to level it and Jeff Tambellini had the only shootout goal as Vancouver rallied twice to win.

Tambellini, who also scored in regulation, fired a shot over Jonas Hiller's shoulder.

Joffrey Lupul, Corey Perry

and Teemu Selanne scored in regulation for the Ducks, but Roberto Luongo stopped them all the shootout, squeezing the legs on Perry's final shot to seal the win.

Hiller was forced into action after starter Curtis McElhinney was cut by a high slap shot to the mask with 8:18 left in regulation. McElhinney took Christian Ehrhoff's hard point shot off the mask and collapsed to the ice as Daniel Sedin put in the rebound to

Associated Press

make it 4-3.

Cam Fowler also scored for the Ducks.

Blackhawks 5, Stars 3

At Chicago, rookies Bryan Bickell and Jeremy Morin scored goals, and Corey Crawford made 28 saves to help Chicago beat Dallas and move into fourth in the Western Conference with 34 points.

Playing without injured offensive stars Patrick Kane and Marian Hossa, the Stanley Cup champion Blackhawks who won their second straight game and fifth in the last six. Jonathan Toews, Troy Brouwer and Patrick Sharp also scored. James Neal, Brandon Segal and Loui Eriksson scored for Dallas.

Predators 3, Red Wings 2

At Detroit, Colin Wilson, Martin Erat and J.P. Dumont scored and Anders Lindback made 35 saves to help Nashville hand Detroit its third straight loss.

Pavel Datsyuk had a goal and an assist and Johan Franzen also scored for Detroit.

In other NHL games it was San Jose 5, Philadelphia 4, SO; Vancouver 5, Anaheim 4, SO; Pittsburgh 5, Toronto 2; Nashville 3, Detroit 2; and Chicago 5, Dallas 3. □

CONI attempts to ban entire family for doping

ROME (AP) — The Italian Olympic Committee is attempting to ban an entire family for doping.

CONI anti-doping prosecutor Ettore Torri recommended Thursday that cyclist Lorenzo Bernucci, his wife Valentina Borgioli, brother Alessio Bernucci, mother Antonella Rossi and father-in-law Fabrizio Borgioli each be banned after being linked to blood doping by a prosecutor in Padua.

Bernucci's former teammate with Lampre, Alessandro Petacchi, is also being investigated after police raids at both riders' houses in April.

A six-year ban has been requested for Bernucci, who is facing his second offense after testing positive for a non-amphetamine appetite suppressant and

getting fired by the T-Mobile team in 2007.

Four-year bans have been recommended for each of the other family members, which would prevent them from involvement in any sports events in Italy. The case will be decided by CONI's internal anti-doping court.

"I wasn't expecting the prosecutor Torri to request such a severe penalty. ... When I'm called before the anti-doping court I will clear up my position, and then the judges will decide," Bernucci told the ANSA news agency. "I don't think the family has anything to do with this. My relatives didn't do anything."

Bernucci was suspended by the Lampre team after the police raid in April, but team spokesman Andrea

Appiani said Thursday that the squad is standing by Petacchi because nothing illicit was found at his house.

The announcement came just a few hours after a gathering of cyclists at CONI attended by Italy's Health Minister Ferruccio Fazio, who announced new measures to combat doping at the amateur level.

"Out of 500 tests in the first semester of 2010, 15.9 percent came back positive among males," Fazio said. "I am about to sign off on a new anti-doping commission that will work very closely with CONI that will produce informative campaigns and collaborate with other anti-doping institutions, starting with the NAS (an elite police force)." □

Amazon's UK site selling WikiLeaks excerpts

By DANA WOLLMAN,
AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK — Portions of the diplomatic cables contained in WikiLeaks are available for sale on Amazon's U.K. website, an odd twist after the company ousted the organization from its hosting service.

Excerpts from some of the 250,000 sensitive documents were contained in a Kindle e-book self-published by an author listed as Heinz Duthel. The book isn't available in the U.S.; people in the U.K. can buy it for 7.37 pounds (\$11.60).

WikiLeaks has embarrassed Washington in recent weeks for exposing a trove of sensitive diplomatic documents, some of which contain brutally frank assessments of foreign governments. The e-book, viewed by The Associated Press in London, consists of

excerpts along with reports on reaction to the releases from media and government officials. It also has a list of the cables by originating embassy. Amazon later added a disclaimer to that effect to the book's product page.

"This book contains commentary and analysis regarding recent WikiLeaks disclosures, not the original material disclosed via the WikiLeaks website," it reads. The e-book does contain the original WikiLeaks material, but more in the form of excerpts than as entire cables. In some respects, the e-book isn't going much beyond what a blog or a news organization might publish.

The title is an electronic book available for Amazon's Kindle e-reader and the company's software for reading Kindle books on mobile phones and computers. Amazon allows

authors to submit their own works and shares revenue with them.

WikiLeaks has been migrating around the world, using Internet companies in different countries to host the site. Last week, Amazon.com Inc. ousted WikiLeaks from its servers, citing a violation of its terms of service.

Other U.S. companies have also attempted to distance themselves from the leak. MasterCard Inc., Visa Inc. and PayPal have all made it impossible for people to donate money to the organization behind WikiLeaks. A Visa credit card was used by the AP to buy the Kindle e-book, underscoring the difficulties private companies have trying to stop the flow of information. WikiLeaks' website, founded by Julian Assange, allows people to access the documents directly instead of forcing



Photo illustration shows a figurine of Julian Assange, founder of the WikiLeaks website, in Naples December 6, 2010

them to rely on newspapers and other media organizations to reprint excerpts.

Duthel, the book's listed author, also sells self-published books such as "Julian Assange. The Whistleblower. Traitor or Hero?" and "Secret and Intelligence Service Encyclopedia." Another is "Discovering Asian Women." This isn't the first time

Amazon has come under fire for selling a controversial book. Last month, Amazon was found to be selling a self-published guide that offered advice to pedophiles, raising questions about how — and if — it vets the self-published books it sells. The book later disappeared, but it wasn't clear whether Amazon or the author had pulled it. □



In this photo taken Dec. 7, 2010, Kelly Rummelhart and her son, Sawyer, 4, who unwittingly racked up nearly \$70 in purchases on 'The Smurfs' Village' game he played on her iPad, are seen in their home in Gridley, Calif.

(AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli)

By PETER SVENSSON,
AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK — "The Smurfs' Village," a game for the iPhone and other Apple gadgets, was released a month ago and quickly became the highest-grossing application in the iTunes store. Yet it's free to download.

So where does the money come from? Kelly Rummelhart of Gridley, Calif., has part of the

Kids go on expensive buying sprees in iPhone games

answer. Her 4-year-old son was using her iPad to play the game and racked up \$66.88 in charges on her credit card without knowing what he was doing. [Related: Holiday scam targets kids]

Rummelhart had no idea that it was possible to buy things — buy them with real money — inside the game. In this case, her son bought one bushel and 11 buckets of "Smurfberry," tokens that speed up gameplay.

"Really, my biggest concern was them scratching the screen. Never in my wildest dreams did I think they would be charging things on it," the 36-year-old mother said.

She counts herself lucky that her son didn't start tapping on another purchase button, like the "wheelbarrow" of Smurfberry for \$59.99.

Rummelhart joins a number of parents who have been horrified by purchases of Smurfberry and other virtual items in top App Store games. The 17 highest-rated comments on "The Smurfs' Village" in the App Store all complain about the high cost of the Smurfberry, and two commenters call it a "scam." Apple introduced "in-app purchases" last year, letting developers use the iTunes billing system to sell items and add-ons in their games and applications.

This year, developers have started to use the system in earnest as the main revenue stream for many games. Of the 10 highest-grossing apps in the App Store, six are games that are free to download but allow in-app purchases. Four of those are easy, child-friendly games. Two of them, "Tap Zoo" and "Bakery Story," have buttons for in-app purchases of \$100 in just two taps.

Capcom Entertainment Inc., the publisher of "The Smurfs' Village," says inadvertent purchases by children are "lamentable." When it realized what was happening, it added a warning about the option of in-app purchases to the game's description in the App

Store, and it's updating the game to include warnings inside it as well. The game has retreated to being the fourth-highest-grossing app in the App Store.

[Related: Portable gaming systems falling out of favor]

The warnings may alert parents, but it's doubtful that they'd deter children who can't read and don't understand money. Also, the option to buy \$59.99 worth of Smurfberry at a time remains. Capcom spokesman Michael Larson says "Smurfs" is no different from other games in this regard, and the bulk purchasing option is useful to adult "power players."

It's quite likely that most of the money pulled in by these games comes from addicted adults who want to quickly build their Smurf villages, bakeries, zoos and zombie farms. But there's a loophole in the in-app purchase process that children stick their fingers through.

Usually, the purchases require the owner of the device to enter his or her iTunes password. But there is no password challenge if the owner has entered the password in the last 15 minutes for any reason. That means that if a user enters the password for a purchase or a free app upgrade, then hands the phone or iPad over to a kid, the child will not be stopped by a password prompt.

Capcom and other game publishers have no control over the 15-minute password-free period, which is set by Apple.

Apple defends its system. Spokeswoman Trudy Muller says the password system is adequate and points out that parents can restrict in-app purchases. The parents contacted for the story received refunds from Apple after complaining, and praised the company's responsiveness.

However, there's reason to believe that the password timeout doesn't always work. □

Actor Snipes begins serving sentence at Pa. prison

LEWIS RUN, Pa. — Actor Wesley Snipes began serving a three-year sentence at a federal prison in Pennsylvania on Thursday for failure to file income tax returns.

Snipes, 48, arrived shortly before noon at the Federal Correctional Institution McKean in the tiny northwestern Pennsylvania town of Lewis Run, federal prisons spokesman Ed Ross said. He had been ordered to surrender by noon.

The minimum security prison camp is worlds away from the harsh prison fortresses depicted in the Snipes' films "Undisputed" and "Brooklyn's Finest." The minimum-security camp doesn't have fences around its perimeter. The 300 nonviolent inmates live in barracks that feature two-man rooms, daily showers and double-feature movie showings Friday through Sunday. Alas, no NC-17, R or X ratings allowed, which knocks out much of Snipes' action-heavy repertoire.

The most jarring aspect of the celebrity's stay might be the five daily head counts, three during the overnight hours. And Snipes, who earned a reported \$13 million for the "Blade: Trinity" sequel, will have to adjust to earning just pennies an hour handling kitchen, laundry or other campus chores. He can spend just \$290 a month at the prison commissary.

Snipes has appeared in dozens of studio films, from "White Men Can't Jump" and "Demolition Man" in the early 1990s to the blockbuster Blade trilogy.

None of which will score him any points at McKean, officials insist.

"We recognize that he is high profile, but we treat all our inmates the same," spokeswoman Shirley White told The Associated Press last week. According to U.S. prosecutors, the actor failed to file any tax returns for at least a decade, and owed \$2.7 million in taxes on \$13.8 million in income from 1999 to 2001 alone. Snipes, a dues-paying member of a tax-protest group that challenges the government's right to collect taxes, described himself at his 2008 sentencing as a naive truth-seeker.

"I am an idealistic, naive, passionate, truth-

seeking, spiritually motivated artist, unschooled in the science of law and finance," said Snipes, who had pursued theater and dance from an early age, attending the vaunted High School for the Performing Arts in New York City. Tuesday night, he told CNN's "Larry King Live" that he was not nervous about reporting to prison. Star of the "Blade" trilogy, Snipes was convicted in 2008 on three misdemeanor counts of willful failure to file income tax returns. On Wednesday, he made a last-minute request for a new trial, but on Thursday a judge in Florida rejected the emergency motion. Snipes had argued that a judge erred by not allowing defense attorneys to interview jurors about misconduct allegations, but U.S. District Judge William Terrell Hodges said the motion merely re-argued issues that have already been decided.

At McKean, he can pursue his spirituality at weekly meetings of nearly any religious group imaginable, from Wiccans to Jehovah's Witnesses to Spanish-speaking Evangelical Catholics.

The martial-arts enthusiast can get his exercise playing sand volleyball or indoor basketball, or work out on an elliptical machine or stair climber. And he can tap into his fun side through badminton, bocci or bridge.

Should he pull a muscle in a pickup game, the infirmary copay is just \$2.

But it's not all fun and games.

The daily wake-up call is at 6:35 a.m. The mundane jobs run seven hours a day. There's little fashion flair to the prison-issued khakis. And contact in the visitors room is limited to "a kiss," according to the prison handbook.

Snipes has tried to delay his arrival while he takes his appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. But the trial judge said he had gotten a fair trial. Hodges saw in Snipes "a history of contempt" for U.S. tax laws, the judge said at sentencing. Never mind that the actor, changing course, had delivered \$5 million in checks to the IRS that day. Hodges imposed consecutive one-year terms for the three misdemeanor convictions. □



FILE - In this Oct. 30, 2009 file photo, Aretha Franklin performs at the 25th Anniversary Rock & Roll Hall of Fame concert at Madison Square Garden in New York.

(AP Photo/Henny Ray Abrams, File)

Cousin: Aretha Franklin set for hospital release

DETROIT — Aretha Franklin's cousin says the ailing legendary singer is "doing better than doctors expected" and expects to be released from the hospital this weekend.

Brenda Corbett tells the Detroit Free Press for a Thursday story that Franklin "has a long life in front of her and will be back in concert, on stage, late spring or early summer."

Franklin announced last week that she had undergone a surgical procedure. Neither she nor her publicist have said what is ailing the 68-year-old Queen of Soul.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson told The Associated Press on Wednesday that he visited Franklin four or five times and her spirits "are high and her faith is strong."

Franklin last month canceled all concert dates and personal appearances through May on doctors' orders. □



FILE - In a Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2009 file photo, actor Wesley Snipes poses during the photo call for the film 'Brooklyn's Finest' at the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy. Snipes reports to the Federal Correctional Institution McKean in Lewis Run, Pa. Thursday, Dec. 9, 2010, to begin his three-year sentence for failing to pay taxes.

(AP Photo/Andrew Medichini, File)

Doors' Jim Morrison to get pardoned in Florida

BRENDAN FARRINGTON
SUZETTE LABOY,
Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — A woman who said she was married to The Doors singer Jim Morrison on Thursday called Florida's intention to pardon him for a 1969 indecent exposure conviction a cheap political ploy.

Patricia Kennealy Morrison told The Associated Press she's not pleased with the pardon and doesn't think the late singer would be either because he didn't expose himself on stage as some claim. The conviction should be expunged or the verdict overturned as fraud rather than just pardoned, she said. "I have a real problem with the semantics of a pardon. The pardon says that all his suffering and all that he went through during the trial, everything both of us went through, was negated," she said. □



FILE - James Morrison of The Doors in an undated file photo. Outgoing Gov. Charlie Crist wants to posthumously pardon Morrison of indecent exposure and profanity convictions, and the governor's last chance is coming up at a Clemency Board meeting next Thursday, Dec. 9, 2010. Crist leaves office in January.

(AP Photo, File)

Gov. Charlie Crist planned to ask for a pardon — expected to be granted Thursday — because of doubts that Morrison actually exposed his penis during a rowdy March 1, 1969 concert at Miami's Dinner Key Auditorium. He and the three-member Cabinet serve as the Clemency Board. Approval is required by the governor and at least two other members. Two members have said they will vote with the governor. □

BUSINESSAruba **TODAY****Stocks trade flat after jobless claims drop**By MATTHEW CRAFT,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK – Encouraging news from the labor market has stocks mixed in midday trading Thursday.

Stocks had edged higher in the morning after a report from the Labor Department showed that first time claims for unemployment benefits dropped last week to the second-lowest level this year. Claims fell to 421,000, below the 428,000 figure that Wall Street expected.

The four-week average of claims also slid for the fifth straight week, reaching the lowest level since August 2008, before the darkest days of the financial crisis.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index is inching up, a day after setting a closing high for 2010. The index rose 0.4, or 0.03 percent, to 1228.70. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 25 points, or 0.2 percent,

to 11,346.63. The Nasdaq composite index rose 3, or 0.1 percent, to 2,611.91.

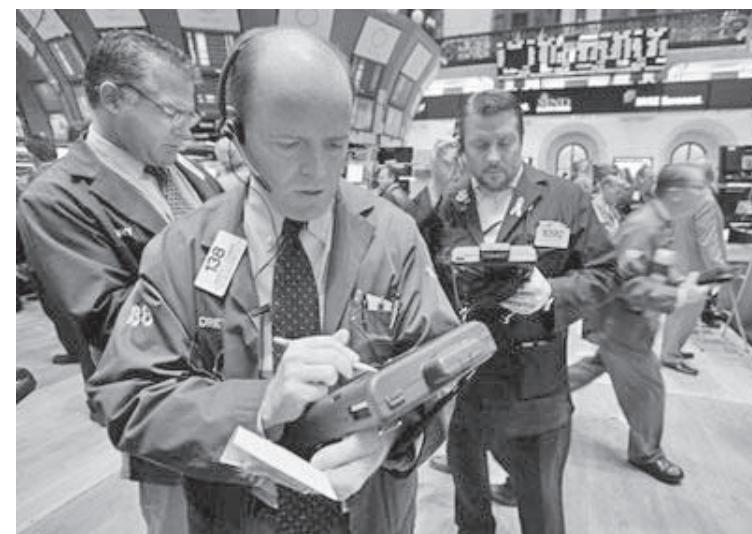
Of the 30 stocks in the Dow, 17 fell. The index's laggard is DuPont. The chemical maker's shares are down 1.7 percent after it forecast earnings and sales for next year at the low end of analysts' expectations. Treasurys prices are slightly higher, causing their yields to drop after getting crushed for two days straight. The yield on the 10-year note slipped to 3.24 percent. The yield, which help set rates for a wide variety of loans, reached as high as 3.33 percent Wednesday, the highest level in nearly six months. Higher rates in the Treasury market have helped lift the dollar against the Japanese yen and the euro. The dollar index rose 0.3 percent against an index of six other major currencies.

President Barack Obama's compromise with Republicans

to let all Americans keep Bush-era tax cuts for two years has helped push Treasurys lower and stocks higher this week. The S&P 500 index closed at a new yearly high of 1,228.28 on Wednesday. It reached its last high on Nov. 5.

The plan still needs approval from Congress. The White House has been pushing Democrats to back the measure, arguing that a defeat could knock the economy back into recession. It also contains a provision extending unemployment benefits. Several Democrats predicted the compromise would pass with widespread Republican support, although House Democrats voted to reject the deal in its current form.

Economists expect the tax package to boost the U.S. economy and are already raising their estimates for economic growth next year as a result. Goldman Sachs's



FILE - In this Dec. 2, 2010 file photo, Andrew O'Connor, second left, works with fellow traders on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew, file)

rough estimate is that the tax proposal could add between 0.5 and 1 percentage point to economic growth in 2011. A stronger economy diminishes the appeal of ultra-safe investments like Treasurys and raises the prospect of higher inflation.

The change in inflation

expectations could make for a messy Treasury auction Thursday afternoon, when the government plans to sell \$13 billion in 30-year Treasurys, currently paying 4.42 percent.

Investors like the higher yields, but 30-year bonds would get hit the hardest if inflation picks up. □



FILE - California Public Utilities Commission Executive Director Paul Clanon testifies before the Senate Commerce Committee during a hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington, in this Sept. 28, 2010 file photo, on the San Bruno, Calif., gas pipeline explosion. Clanon, Tuesday night Dec. 7, 2010 at a town hall meeting, tried to defuse one of the fiercest criticisms that emerged since the explosion — that PG&E characterized the pipe as 'high-risk' in 2007, got permission to bill ratepayers to upgrade it and then dropped the planned improvements the next year.

(AP Photo/Susan Walsh, File)

By SANDY SHORE,
AP Business Writer

You can blame the rising price of natural gas on cold weather and Christmas lights.

Natural gas has risen about 5 percent since the first of the

month, as cold air and snow poured across much of the country. Forecasts say the cold will continue for at least another couple of weeks. Since about half the homes in the country are heated with

Cold weather and holiday lights boost natural gas

natural gas, it's not unusual to see prices rise as winter sets in. Natural gas hit a four-month high on Wednesday, but it is still well below the yearly peak of about \$6 per 1,000 cubic feet reached last January. On Thursday natural gas slipped 13 cents to \$4.476 per 1,000 cubic feet on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The government said Thursday that natural gas supplies fell last week as thermostats were cranked up. Although shrinking supplies often push up prices, analysts said the drop was expected and already priced in. Utilities use natural gas to make electricity for homes and businesses. The Edison Electric Institute said U.S. electricity production

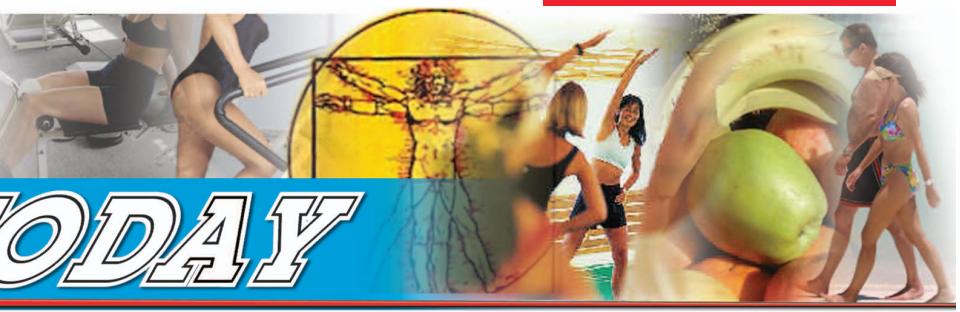
rose 1.4 percent last week, compared to the same week in 2009. Demand at this time of year gets a boost as holiday lights wink on, said energy analyst Stephen Schork. "You do get about a four-week spike in Christmas light load, believe it or not, and that's what we're seeing," Schork said. Meanwhile, drivers are seeing pump prices creep closer to \$3 a gallon across the country. The price of a gallon of regular hit \$2.975 a gallon on Thursday, according to AAA, Wright Express and the Oil Price Information Service.

That's nearly 10 cents more than a week ago and 34 cents more than a year ago. The average price could reach \$3 a gallon or more by Christmas.

It would be the first time ever that pump prices averaged \$3 a gallon at the holiday. In some parts of the country drivers already pay more than that.

In its weekly report the Energy Department said natural gas supplies in the U.S. fell 89 billion cubic feet to 3.725 trillion cubic feet for the week ended Dec. 3. That is 1.5 percent less than a year ago and 9.8 percent more than the five-year average.

In other energy trading, oil prices rose on encouraging economic news. U.S. jobless claims dropped and Japan said its economy grew more than expected in the third quarter. Benchmark oil for January delivery added 86 cents to \$88.86 a barrel. □

HEALTH**Aruba TODAY**

Study: Half of women over 40 get annual mammograms



A doctor exams mammograms, a special type of X-ray of the breasts, which is used to detect tumours as part of a regular cancer prevention medical check-up at a clinic in Nice, south eastern France.

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE,
AP Medical Writer

SAN ANTONIO — Remember the uproar last year when a government task force said most women don't need annual mammograms? It turns out that only half of women over 40 had been getting them that often to start with, even when they have insurance that covers screening.

The information comes from a review of insurance claims that show what women actually do — not what they say in surveys.

"We all support many things — fast food isn't what we should eat for dinner every night — but that isn't what we do," said Dr. Milayna Subar of Medco Health Solutions Inc., which manages benefits for many large insurers, including some Medicare plans.

She did the study, using records on more than 1.5 million women, and reported results Thursday at a breast cancer conference.

The finding is disturbing, said Dr. Judy Garber of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston and president-elect of the American Association for Cancer Research, one of the conference's sponsors. "Here's an insured population where cost is not a barrier," and yet many women are not getting tested.

Rates of screening are likely even lower among women without insurance, though government programs pay for mammograms for many women who lack such coverage.

Mammograms are X-rays of the breast that can reveal tumors when they're too small to be felt. But they

also raise many false alarms, leading to worry, expense and overtreatment. How often and when women should get mammograms has long been controversial.

In November 2009, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force said women in their 40s at average risk for cancer do not need mammograms and that women 50 and older need them only every two years. Many groups, including the American Cancer Society, still advise annual mammograms starting at 40.

Everyone agrees that the age group that most benefits from mammograms is women 50 to 64, and the government estimates that roughly three-quarters of women in this age group had a mammogram within the previous two years, based on surveys.

However, the review of

insurance claims from 2006 through 2009 put the true number at 65 percent. It also found that only 54 percent of women in this age group had been getting mammograms every year.

Among all women 40 to 85, only half had been getting annual mammograms, the study found.

Doctors will not be surprised by these results, said Dr. Peter Ravdin of the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, one of the organizers of the cancer conference. Women forget or lose track of when they last had a mammogram, and that's one of the downsides of advice not to go every year, he said. Some may even lie when asked how often they go.

"There's both a conscious and mostly unconscious desire to please the person asking that question," because most women know they should be getting one, Ravdin said.

Dr. Marisa Weiss, a 51-year-old Philadelphia breast cancer specialist who founded the consumer Web site breastcancer.org, is glad she had been following her own advice to get screened every year. She was diagnosed in April with breast cancer found through a routine mammogram.

"It was a very favorable diagnosis and I feel very lucky about that. I was a true beneficiary of early detection," she said.

If she'd followed advice to get screened just every two years, it could have meant "a real difference in my prognosis," Weiss said. □

Bone drug Zometa flops in breast cancer study

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE,
AP Medical Writer

SAN ANTONIO — Doctors are reporting a stunning setback for a promising new approach for fighting breast cancer.

A large study found that the bone-building drug Zometa (zow-MAY-tuh) did not prevent the return of cancer or improve survival in women with early or mid-stage disease. Zometa did seem to help women at least five years past menopause or over 60. The drug's maker, Novartis AG, is considering further tests in those women. Studies also are testing similar drugs, bisphosphonates like Fosamax and Boniva, to see if they help prevent breast cancer. Zometa is currently used to treat cancer that has already spread to the bone. The new study will not change that or affect the use of other similar drugs for osteoporosis. □

Life expectancy slips, stroke dips to No. 4 killer

NEW YORK — A new government report shows U.S. life expectancy has dropped slightly after mostly inching up over the years.

Life expectancy dropped about a month, from 77.9 years in 2007 to 77.8 years in 2008. The author of the report called the change minuscule and says it will take many years to see whether it's a trend. A similar decline occurred in 2005.

For the first time in 50 years, stroke fell from the No. 3 leading cause of death. It was surpassed by chronic lower respiratory diseases, which include asthma, emphysema and chronic bronchitis.

The preliminary report for 2008 was released Thursday by the National Center for Health Statistics. □

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Surgeon general: 1 cigarette is 1 too many

By LAURAN NEERGAARD,
AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON — Think the occasional cigarette won't hurt? Even a bit of social smoking — or inhaling someone else's secondhand smoke — could be enough to block your arteries and trigger a heart attack, says the newest surgeon general's report on the killer the nation just can't kick.

Lung cancer is what people usually fear from smoking, and yes, that can take years to strike. But Thursday's report says there's no doubt that tobacco smoke begins poisoning immediately — as more than 7,000 chemicals in each puff rapidly spread through the body to cause cellular damage in nearly every organ. "That one puff on that cigarette could be the one that causes your heart attack," said Surgeon General Regina Benjamin.

Or the one that triggers someone else's: "I advise people to try to avoid being around smoking any way that you can," she said.

About 443,000 Americans die from tobacco-caused illnesses every year. While the smoking rate has dropped dramatically since 1964, when the first surgeon general's report declared tobacco deadly, progress has stalled in the past decade. About 46 million adults — one in five — still smoke, and tens of millions more are regularly exposed to secondhand smoke. The government had hoped to drop the smoking rate to 12 percent by this year, a goal not only missed but that's now been put off to 2020.

Thursday's report is the 30th issued by the nation's surgeons general to warn the public about tobacco's risks. "How many reports more does Congress need to have

to say that cigarettes as a class of products ought to be banned?" asked well-known nicotine expert Dr. K. Michael Cummings of the Roswell Park Cancer Institute, who helped to review the report. "One-third of the patients who are in our hospital are here today because of cigarettes." Still, this newest report is unusual because it devotes more than 700 pages to detail the biology of how cigarette smoke accomplishes its dirty deeds — including the latest genetic findings to help explain why some people become more addicted than others, and why some smokers develop tobacco-caused disease faster than others.

There is no safe level of exposure to cigarette smoke, whether you deliberately inhale it or are a nonsmoker who breathes in other people's fumes, the report concludes. Nor is there evidence yet to

tell if efforts to develop so-called safer cigarettes really will pan out.

But more recently it's become clear that some of the harms — especially those involving the heart — kick in right away, said Dr. Terry Pechacek of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

That means social smoking, the occasional cigarette at a party, can be enough to trigger a heart attack in someone whose arteries already are silently clogged, he said.

"Too often people think the occasional social cigarette is not so dangerous, when in fact this report says yes, it is," he said. So is breathing secondhand smoke. When Pueblo, Colo., banned smoking in all public places in 2003, the number of people hospitalized for heart disease plummeted 41 percent in just three years, the report found. □

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ORANJESTAD



SAN NICOLAAS

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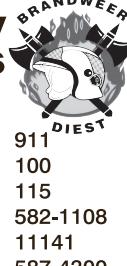
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Climate goal may spell end for some coral reefs

By KARL RITTER,

Associated Press

PUERTO MORELOS, Mexico

— The once-vibrant coral reef shielding these sun-soaked beaches from the wrath of the sea is withering away under the stress of pollution and warmer water.

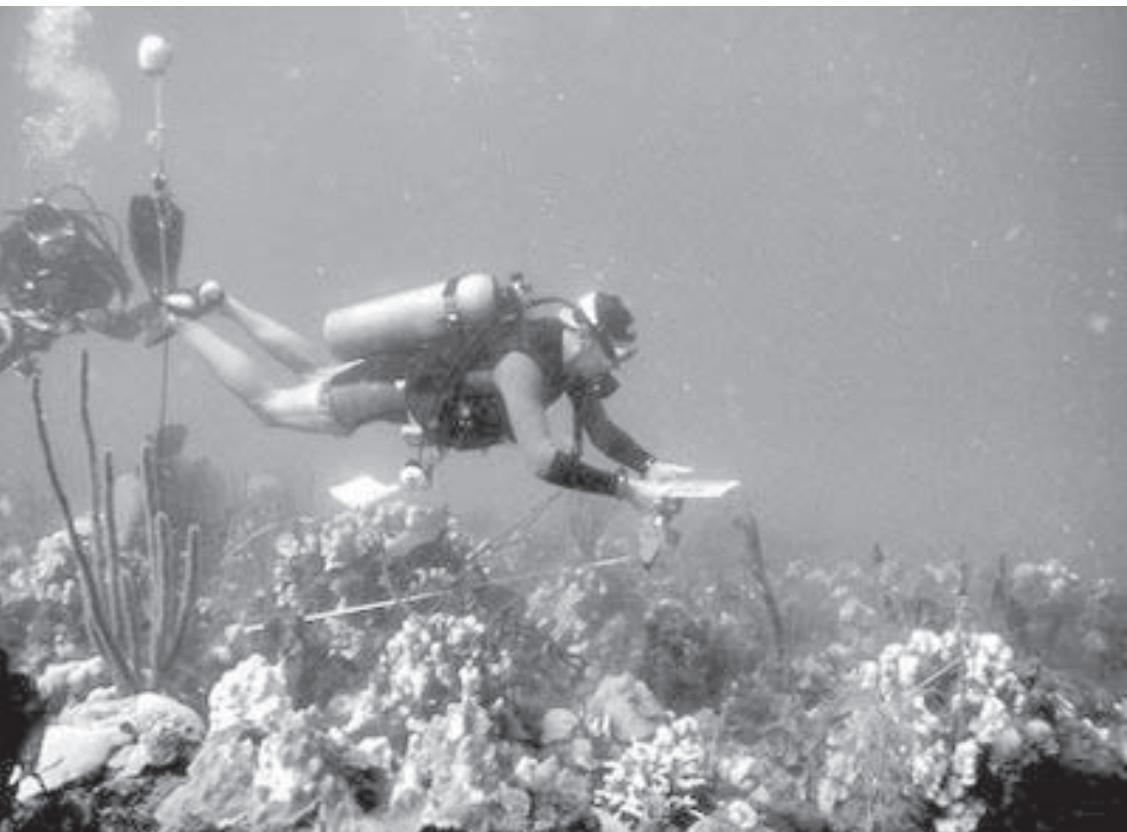
It's not likely to get much help from world governments meeting in Cancun for talks on a new climate pact. Their so-far elusive goal to limit global warming to 2 degrees C (3.6 F) is too little too late, says coral expert Roberto Iglesias.

"That represents the end of the coral reefs in the world," says the Mexican scientist, who works at a marine research station in Puerto Morelos, 12 miles (about 20 kilometers) south of the beach resort hosting the annual U.N. climate conference.

Coral reefs are like underwater jungles that host 25 percent of marine species and provide food and income to hundreds of millions of people, mostly in the developing world. They also serve as shock absorbers to storm surges whipped up by hurricanes.

But many reefs, including the one off this hotel-packed coastline, have been damaged by water pollution and overfishing, leaving them vulnerable to a warming ocean that "bleaches" corals and sometimes kills them, Iglesias said.

This year, preliminary reports show global coral bleaching reached its worst level since 1998, when 16 percent of the world's reefs were killed off,



said Mark Eakin, a coral reef specialist at the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"Clearly, we are on track for this to be the second worst (bleaching) on record," he said. "All we're waiting on now is the body count."

The 700-mile (1,100-kilometer) Mesoamerican reef that runs along Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula — suffering under other stresses — was spared the bleaching this year, but other parts of the Caribbean were hit hard, including Tobago, Curacao, Panama and islands north of Venezuela.

Some of the biggest impacts were in Southeast Asia. In Indonesia's Aceh province, surveys showed some 80 percent of the bleached corals

died. In July, Malaysia closed several popular dive sites after virtually all the corals in those areas were damaged by bleaching.

Bleaching occurs when warmer temperatures disturb the symbiotic relationship between the corals and tiny algae that live inside them.

When the algae are spit out, rainbow-colored reefs are turned into pale and lifeless skeletons — a "hideous" sight for veteran scuba divers like 52-year-old Eakin.

"You can't imagine what it's like to jump in the water and expect beautiful vibrant colors and all the corals are white," he said.

One or 2 degrees C (1.8-3.6 degrees F) above normal can be enough to cause bleaching.

Corals may recover if the water cools and the algae return, but they're still significantly weaker and more vulnerable to disease. If the warmer temperatures persist, the corals die.

Bleaching occurs due to natural variability; both the 1998 and 2010 events were linked to the El Nino weather phenomenon. But the gradual rise of ocean temperatures means "it doesn't take much to push them over the edge," Eakin said.

The World Meteorological Organization says most tropical waters already have seen surface temperatures rise by up to 0.5 C (1 F) in the past 50 years. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the U.N. climate-science network, projects an increasing frequency of bleaching episodes that "is

very likely to further reduce both coral cover and diversity on reefs over the next few decades."

Many reefs have already been degraded by disease and the impact of human activities, including discharges of fertilizers and waste as well as overfishing of parrotfish and other species that help keep the corals clean and healthy.

The global area covered by coral reefs has shrunk by 20 percent since 1950 and another 35 percent could disappear in the next 40 years, even without the impact of climate change, according to a report released in October by the World Meteorological Organization and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Off the Riviera Maya coast south of Cancun, where large swaths of mangrove forests have been cut down to make room for an endless row of beachfront resorts, only 15 percent of the coral reefs are alive, down from about 45 percent in 1995, said Fernando Secaira, who coordinates a Mesoamerican Reef program for the U.S.-based environmental group Nature Conservancy.

The biggest problem, he said, is the rapid development, with tens of thousands of hotel rooms added only in the past decade. Fertilizers from lawns and golf courses and sewage from the developments filters through the limestone rock and is washed out onto the reef by underground rivers, altering the balance of the sensitive ecosystem.

Secaira said such unhealthy reefs will find it difficult to adjust to warming waters, raising the risk they will be destroyed by bleaching or diseases.

The priority for conservationists is identifying the most resilient reefs, and protecting them as climate change sets in with full force, raising temperatures and acidifying the ocean, which limits the carbonate minerals that help corals grow.

Scientists say no emissions cuts being considered by world governments will suffice to prevent that from happening.

"We're going to lose more corals and more reefs before this is all over," said Eakin, of NOAA. "The question at this point is how many can we save." □

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Presidente de Brasil defiende a WikiLeaks

BRASILIA (Reuters) - El presidente de Brasil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, defendió y se solidarizó el jueves con el fundador del sitio WikiLeaks, Julian Assange, detenido esta semana en Londres por acusaciones de crímenes sexuales.

AdChoices

El australiano, cuyo sitio en internet causó estragos en la diplomacia estadounidense al comenzar a divulgar miles de documentos secretos sobre las relaciones diplomáticas del Gobierno estadounidense, recibió el espaldarazo de Lula durante un discurso en defensa de la libertad de expresión.

"Aparece el tal WikiLeaks y desnuda a la diplomacia que parecía inalcanzable, parecía la más correcta del mundo, y ahí comienza una búsqueda. No sé si colocaron carteles como en los tiempos del lejano oeste, se busca vivo o muerto, y capturaron al muchacho", dijo Lula.

"Si el lo leyó, es porque alguien lo escribió. El culpable no es el que lo divulgó, la culpa

es de quien escribió. Por lo tanto, en vez de culpar al que divulgó, culpen al que escribió la tontería, porque si no no habría el escándalo que hay", agregó.

Líderes y autoridades diplomáticas mundiales se han dividido respecto a Assange, con algunos países condenando la divulgación de los documentos de WikiLeaks y otras autoridades compartiendo la opinión de Lula.

Assange, que ha residido periódicamente en Suecia, fue acusado este año de conducta sexual impropia por dos voluntarias suecas de WikiLeaks.

El australiano, que niega las acusaciones, fue arrestado en Londres debido a un mandato internacional por esa acusación.

Pese a la captura de su fundador, WikiLeaks prometió que seguirá divulgando detalles de los despachos confidenciales estadounidense.

Hasta ahora sólo ha sido publicada una pequeña parte. □



Imagen de archivo del presidente de Brasil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, en una conferencia en Río de Janeiro. Dic 3 2010 El presidente de Brasil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, defendió y se solidarizó el jueves con el fundador del sitio WikiLeaks, Julian Assange, detenido esta semana en Londres por acusaciones de crímenes sexuales. REUTERS/Sergio Moraes/ARCHIVO

God saw he was getting tired, When a cure was not to be. So he wrapped his arms around him And whispered Come to Me. In tears we saw him sinking, We watched him fade away. Our hearts were truly broken. He fought so hard to stay. But when we saw him sleeping, Peacefully and free from pain, We could not wish him back, To suffer that again. So keep your arms around him, Lord, And give him special care, Make up for all he suffered, That seemed to us unfair. So many times we've needed him, So many times we've cried. If LOVE could have saved him, HE never would have died!



General Manager Aruba Phoenix Hotel

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Son: Cole John Neophytou

Parents: Mr. Elias & Loulla Neophytou

Brother: James Neophytou & wife Elena

Nephew & God Son: Paul James Neophytou

Niece: Eliana Neophytou

In-Laws: Mr. Jim & Ginny Fraser

Brother in law: Bradley James

Nephew: Justin James

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